

nderstood in this sense, Kierkegaard's middle term metaphor for God is misleading metaphysical analogy of a logical idea but a hermeneutical e of how to live a human life worthy of that name: by trusting in God e *middle term* of everything that can truly be said to be, and by living of hope that knows how to make a difference – in the way it perceives orld, and in the way it lives in it. Without God human life would not be 'solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short,' but there would be no t all. Yet there is human life, and if God is the middle term, then even gh there is nothing to point to, there is much to hope for – by trusting id.

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'In God We Trust' Trust in the Making – and in Becoming

Philipp Stoellger

"The communion-bread, you know, is in the shape of coins,' Shaftoe remarks [...]
'But how richer a reassurance are those coins of bread, than ones of gold! [...]
For gold and silver may buy admission to a Club, or other place of debauchery.
But coins of bread have bought me admission to the Kingdom of Heaven."
(Stephenson 2004, 838f)

"Le coupable, rendu capable de recommencer,
telle serait la figure de ce *déliement* qui commande tous les autres."
(Ricoeur 2000, 638)

"Cette dissociation exprime un *acte de foi*,
un crédit adressé aux ressources de régénération du soi."
(Ricoeur 2000, 638)

1. Theology as Trust-Theory

If trust is a metaphor for faith, then the reflection on faith that we call *theology* is *trust-theory* (*avant la lettre*). Trust-theory therefore may be a part of theology (*etsi deus non daretur*) or at least a necessary contribution to it.

Trust is a metaphor for the relation to God that we call 'faith.' For this reason topics of faith reappear in this metaphor (taken as model of thought). The concept of faith already contains in itself a model for a theory of trust: *Trust is not only 'in the making,' but basically 'in becoming.'* However, what are the ways and *modes of 'trust-building'* between God and man: sacraments, scripture, preaching and praying, or history and witnesses, conscience and promises? How far can we go with our trust? One may see that a 'reduplication' of trust will arise: Do we trust 'trust-makers' like reasons or institutions or do we trust in God alone?

According to the hermeneutics of trust, this metaphor is given in language and in human interaction. Therefore trust in God is 'given' in and by trust in others. Does trust in God have meaning only within human trust-relations or are these relations meaningful (in a theological sense) only insofar as they

depend on trust in God? Who is the basic trust-maker in Christian religion? Whereby is the meaning of trust given?

If trust is given in human interaction not only in making it, but in *becoming*, then trust is a field of 'inter-passivity' (Pfaller 2000). Thus in a first sense we can ask: may others trust 'for us,' i.e., may trust be deputized? In a second sense: May parents trust 'for' their children, or one Christian for another, or Christ for us? In a third sense, we can say that trust grows out of non-intentional modes of communication. It is rather a side-effect than an intentionally 'made' effect of communication. Perhaps due to this it is a topic of indirectness and detours. How can we 'place' or 'put' trust, if trust is placed and put? How can we achieve trust when it cannot be achieved intentionally? Therefore I will investigate the modes and the mediality of trust – as trust in the making and in becoming.

2. Trust- and Truth-Theory

There is an intimate relation between truth-theory and trust-theory. If there are conditions of truth, there are conditions of trust as well; be they conditions of possibility or even of impossibility. Furthermore, if you can ask for truth-makers (as Mellor (2004) points out), you have to ask for trust-makers as well.

Like truth, trust has to do with *consensus*. Where there is a consensus between all of us, there may be truth (or not). What we all agree about obviously is trustful, even if the trust may be betrayed or destroyed at times. If there is a given consensus, this fulfills a condition for trust. Yet the consensus also is a possible *result* of trust. The consensus is at once a condition and a result of trust. Are they co-emergent? If trust needs certain conditions, as in religion, the givenness of the world as creation or of God as loving father, the consensus about these metaphors and their 'referents' implies a consensus in the ways of seeing and living. Under these conditions trust in such modes of speaking and living is possible – not without them.

Truth needs a certain *coherence*. Does this apply to trust as well? We trust perhaps in our car, usually in our wife, and nevertheless in God (if we do so). There is no need for coherence. We trust in quite incoherent phenomena, even in ideas that never fully appear (such as the ideas of 'equal rights' or 'justice'). Truth though is bound to a certain coherence, while trust has a license to be incoherent and inconsequent. This is a chance, but a risk as well. It becomes manifest in more or less superstitious forms of trust (e.g., trust in a horseshoe) which coexist with the trust in machines, people, and institutions. For instance, some students may 'pray' before an exam, but nevertheless trust in the 'mundane' correctness of the exam and rely on their knowledge. The key problem and incoherence in trust, however, is of

course the complicated difference between trust in another person and trust in complex supplements like institutions or rules of a society. Is such a metaphorical or technical 'transfer' of personal trust in non-personal referents of trust meaningful? Do we (verbally) 'trust' an institution such as, e.g., the university or the state?

Finally, truth – for some theorists – needs a referent, perhaps a causal connection or at least *correspondence*. Even if this idea may be wrong, trust can never be what it is without correspondence. If you trust your car and it disappoints you, you will lose your trust. If you trust a neighbor and you become aware of him betraying you, you will withdraw your trust. Thereby a key question on 'subjectivity' returns: is the 'immediate self-consciousness' – or whatever other 'immediacy' can be invented – a kind of trust-relation, namely trust in oneself? Subjectivity is, as far as we can think about it, a relation and not an immediacy. The *connaissance de soi* therefore may be interpreted as trust in oneself, trust to be and to remain the same even after sleeping, narcosis or coma. Continuity of the self over time is a question of trust, but not only of trust in oneself, but also trust in 'the world' and in others.

The theological question here would be: is trust in God the key-correspondence for the identity of oneself and the rest of the world? Is trust the existential truth, the truth of existence? If faith is trust, than *this* trust is the truth of your existence. But trust can be tested and challenged. Can this happen to faith as well?

3. Differences in Trust

As we distinguish between faith and superstition, we also need to distinguish between justified and illusionary trust. We are acquainted with the following distinctions:

1. *Trust in our lifeworlds*: Let us call it trust we live by, because there is no human life without any trust. If we would trust in nothing and no one, mistrust would be pervasive and no interaction possible. This is trivial and the consequence is quite simple: mistrust, hesitation, and doubt presuppose trust as their condition of possibility.

2. *Trust as metaphor for faith*: We might call it trust we live by in faith or *coram Deo*, because there is no 'justified' relation to God without trust. But is this metaphor for faith *identical* with what it is used for? Is faith nothing else than trust in God? In the tradition of thinking about faith certain cognitive features in the concept of faith have always been recognized. This is necessary regarding the concept of trust in God as well, and there is probably no form of trust without any knowledge about its referent. If faith is

basically *fiducia*, then it *is* trust. One problem then is that faith as trust seems not to allow for any moments of doubt in the concept of faith.

3. Nevertheless, there is also *superstitious trust* (e.g., trust in 72 virgins in paradise or the inventions of hell and purgatory). Let us call it trust we die by or self-deceptive trust. I suppose there is no trust without the risk of falling into superstition or deception. As in truth-questions there seems to be no external point of view wherefrom we could 'compare' whether trust is deceptive or not. Nevertheless, a critical instance may be the 'test of time' and the 'test of others': if trust leads again and again to absurd consequences or into the danger of death, it seems to be deceptive. So the distinction of trust and superstitious trust seems to be always a judgment *ex post* and not a doctrinal judgment in advance.

4. Therefore, *mistrust* is trust too, but an unfortunate or awkward form of trust in the dark side of life. The same is plausible in hermeneutics: every misunderstanding is an understanding, but with a certain lack (cf. Stoellger 2009). At this place, an anti-skeptical argument returns: skepticism may be a critical form of living in mistrust (always having doubts about everything), but general mistrust would result in a destructive form of life, at least a pathological regression.

5. Finally there is something I would call *hypothetical trust*, i.e. all modes of transferring personal trust into impersonal contexts and relations: in technology, law, economy (money, funds, etc.), and institutions. These metaphorical variations can be called 'hypothetical' because they are 'like' trust. We live as if we would 'trust' institutions; but no one really trusts them; perhaps we rely on them, if they are reliable as time goes by. But Kafka's 'court' and his 'castle' show the modern experience with such institutions. The relation to them may as well be ruled by the hypothesis of mistrust or the experience of absurdity. Therefore transferring trust in institutional contexts seems to be more a hyperbolic than a metaphorical use.

In the following, I will focus on the distinction between trust and superstitious trust. Distinguishing faith from superstition also implies a distinction within trust itself. Imagine, for example, a prayer to the Virgin Mary. For Protestants this is at any rate a superstitious prayer, since they pray to God alone, not to any saints. But given the example of this religious practice, this prayer can be an expression of Roman-Catholic faith as well as of a superstition. The trust in saints would be superstitious if one expects this prayer to have causal effects, such as the doctor, whom you trust by trusting in his professional competences and, perhaps, hoping that he is not too tired or too drunk before the operation. To expect causal effects from the prayer just like from a machine or from a personal actor would be superstitious because the prayer – and with it, faith – would become a means to an end. This would be a grammatical mistake. Even the saint him- or herself would, through the

trust in the saint, become a means to an end, a superstitious method for a certain purpose. This is superstitious trust in metaphysical or magical forms of interaction with 'divine poultry.' If trust becomes a means to an end like a repellent against insects or a remedy against influenza or a device for a certain purpose, then trust becomes superstitious. Trust then becomes a method or instrument for a purpose. And that seems to be a misuse of trust. Or is it trust anymore at all? I suppose, such a 'trust' is, like mistrust, an unfortunate trust, a misguided one. It has become similar to a superstition or a mere hypothesis accepted for a certain purpose.

In religion such a trust is as common as it is misleading (or misguided). In close relations, such as in friendship or in love-relations, such a trust is deceptive (and self-deceptive perhaps). Nevertheless, in a wider context like in law, politics or in technological relations it is a usual and indispensable way to act. For example, I do not really trust my car, but I rely on its construction, on the garage and its service. Perhaps I even trust the mechanic doing the service. But I do not *trust* my car. It is more of a complex reliance on technology and the surrounding service. It is similar with law or politics: Do I trust the lawyer? Do I trust elected representatives? I suppose that institutions and technologies function under the condition of mistrust. Lack of trust or its 'unnecessity' is the presupposition in complex societies and its cultural techniques.

May the horseshoe be a metaphor (or emblem) for the 'trust-like-relations' in modern societies: Even if you do not trust in it, is it working reliably? This *hypothetical* trust means *trust as method*, or methodological trust – and that is not trust in the same sense as in personal relations or in religion. Trust as method is a means to an end, necessary but easily misguided: as if we would trust in saints or in cars. Thus, one has to distinguish between superstitious trust, trust as faith, and hypothetical or methodological trust. Nonetheless, I would resist *not* calling the latter 'trust' as well – with a certain critical consciousness of metaphorical speech. To speak this way is a relevant and indispensable resource of our communication and interaction. It is a part of the social capital (as Pierre Bourdieu has called it).

4. Trust-Tests

The need for trust-tests arises because of the different concepts of trust. Yet, we still do not have exact 'methods' for testing trust, even if we continuously do test our trust. 'Do you believe in reincarnation?' – This also means: 'Do you trust the image that your soul will come back to life in another *Gestalt* in another body?' – or 'Do you trust in saints?' All these questions imply a trust-test: whether you trust in x or not. And the answer from a Protestant perspective seems obvious: we trust in God alone, not in metaphysical

entities or propositions or metaphors. But we also trust in our language, or rather, we cannot not trust in it as long as we are using this language. That is why we cannot escape trust in modes of speech as long as we are speaking. And how we speak shows in what we are trusting.

Do you trust in the bread of the last supper to really be the flesh of Christ? Do you trust in the preached sermon to be the Word of God? And if you trust in the real presence of God in preaching or sacraments, do you need reasons for your trust (justified and true reasons)?

The crucial question is whether trust is seen as a kind of 'justified true belief.' And the answer from a hermeneutical and phenomenological point of view is quite clear: there may be reasons, but trust is not a result of deliberative reasoning. *Trust is not a justified true trust. Trust rather follows the 'principle of insufficient reason'* (Musil 1978, 133–137; cf. 953ff, 977, 1021ff).¹ You trust nevertheless, even if there are no sufficient reasons. The hermeneutics of testimony or witnessing show that testifying is a mode of saying and showing without 'sufficient reasons' and therefore, it is risky to trust a witness. Yet, otherwise no witnessing would be necessary.

Trust *is* what it is only in or by the lack of sufficient reasons. But this insufficiency constitutes the strength of trust. One trusts perhaps even against good reasons. This allows us to say, with biblical connotations: stronger than reasons is trust. And the strength of trust is its privilege to offer a background for acting and reasoning without reasonable reasons. However, when and where do we trust beyond all reasoning and given reasons – for example, in God, not in gravitation? To make a rule out of this exemption, to trust in God even against deliberative reasoning would be nonsense. It remains 'extraordinary' and not the ordinary way of life. But that is a critical regulative remark, not a descriptive one.

5. God and Gravitation

What you trust in is *not* your God. Otherwise Thales would have been right with his strange idea that Gods are everywhere and the world is filled up with Gods. But if what we trust in is not our God, then Luther seems to be wrong – if he would not be corrected by 'Anselm's razor': Only that *quo nihil maius cogitari potest* can be God. Put in the frame of the topic of trust: *in quo nihil maius confideri potest*, that is God.²

¹ Cf. in economy the 'rule of Laplace' as rule of choice in the condition of uncertainty.

² But immediately the problem appears: is God *maius quam confideri potest*? This reminds one of the concept of the *deus absconditus*.

Yet, even in combining Luther and Anselm the result can still be wrong. We trust in a lot of things, in techniques and institutions, in rules and facts – and for sure, we do not hold them to be gods. Take gravitation as an example. There is usually no reason to mistrust it (apart from occasional irritations by whiskey, wine or other divine gifts). And is there any 'greater' (*aliquid maius*) in omnipresence, reliability and 'force' to trust in? The great 'forces' of physics – can there *be* (or *exist*) anything more general and greater? For sure, Anselm thought about God. But is there anything more trustworthy and reliable than gravitation? Does anyone really trust in levitation (apart from dreams)?

One may object that, in this regard, trust is not necessary. Gravitation is not a matter of trust, but a matter of fact. There is no need to trust in gravitation just as there is no need to trust in Newton. Thus do we not trust in what we rely on? Is it (reasonably) possible to mistrust gravitation? If you are notoriously out of balance (without being permanently drunken), the doctor will not ask for gravitation, but probably for your sense of balance and possible pathological irritations of it.

There is no need to mistrust gravitation, as trust seems not to be a question of physics and of nature but of life, more precisely, of *cultural* life. We live by trust and sometimes someone dies by trusting the wrong things or persons. So trust is as dangerous as life. This seems trivial. But if culture is based on trust, its grounds are weaker than culture pretends. The financial crisis has made this obvious.³

6. God and Currency

Book seven of Neal Stephenson's trilogy *The Baroque Cycle* deals with 'currency' – whatever this may be. In the time of the famous alchemist Isaac Newton, coins had been made out of copper, silver and at best out of gold. The value and the necessary shortage of the material were reason enough not to mistrust the coins – usually. Newton was not only an obsessive alchemist, but was also for twenty-seven years (1700–1727) the Master of the Royal Mint in the tower of London, i.e. he had to take care of the golden coins, which were the basic medium of trade in the Empire.⁴ And what he had to take care of gave him more than enough reasons to worry about it. If the

³ Here I skip considerations on 'spirit and sociality': Trust seems to be always grounded in social convictions and modes of interaction. As a 'faith-test' it is possible to imagine a faith against the prevailing agreements and social convictions, such as Luther's gesture of pathos at the 'Reichstag of Worms.' But regarding trust such a gesture seems to be nonsense. Or are scientific discoveries like Galileo's an analogy?

⁴ The 'Master of the Mint' was the official who had to check and test the newly minted coins.

meaning of life is 'to worry' (as Heidegger said), the Master of the Mint is perhaps the most worried man ever. The forgers and counterfeiters undermined the trust in the value of the coins and thereby the whole trade-system was threatened to crash. The Master himself always had to worry about the correctness of the new coins that the Mint minted.

To take care of coins in this time was already a bit old-fashioned because of the rise of currency – a funny invention of some Englishmen. In Stephenson's *Baroque Cycle*, Caroline (princess of Brandenburg-Ansbach, 1683–1737) and Sophie (daughter of the Winterqueen Elisabeth Stuart, 1630–1714) were talking in the garden of Herrenhausen in Hannover about a new funny word in Britain, 'currency,' and Sophie asked for its meaning:

Caroline answers: 'It is the quality that a current [a river] has. They speak of the currency of the River Thames, which is sluggish in most places, but violent when it passes under London Bridge. It is just the same as our word *Umlauf* – running around.'

Sophie: 'That is what I supposed. This Englishman kept discoursing of currency in a way that was most fraught with meaning, and I thought he was speaking of some river or drainage-ditch. Finally I collected that he was using it as a synonym for *money*.'

Caroline: 'Money?'

Sophie: 'I've never felt so dense! ...'

Caroline: 'What an odd coinage.'

Sophie: 'You are too witty for your own good, girl.'

Caroline: 'The Englishmen cannot get away from this topic. Their relationship to money is most peculiar.'

Sophie: 'It is because they have nothing but sheep' (Stephenson 2004, 336).

Later they compare the new paper money with the old one (i.e. gold):

Sophie: 'A coinage based upon silver and gold has a sort of absolute value.'

Caroline: 'Like Sir Isaac's absolute space and time,' Caroline mused. 'You can assay it.'

Sophie: 'But if *value is based upon reputations* – like stocks in Amsterdam – or upon this even more nebulous concept of *flow* –'

Caroline: 'Like the dynamics of Leibniz in which space and time inhere in relationships among objects –'

Sophie: 'Why, then, it becomes unknowable, plastic, vulnerable. For *flow* may have some value in a market-place – and that value might even be real –'

Caroline: 'Of course it is real. People make money from it all the time!'

Sophie: '– but that sort of value cannot survive the refiner's fire at a Trial of the Pyx'⁵ (Stephenson 2004, 341).

The idea is clear: paper money instead of gold is a funny invention in the Baroque Age. And the problem is evident: paper needs trust – trust in the flow, the market and in the reputation of the author of the paper. In the case of mistrust the value flows away. In the time of the rise of paper-money there is a manifest uncertainty, ambiguous emotions and a lack of trust. The topics

⁵ 'The Trial of the Pyx' is a procedure of testing the coins for their standards – and at last the basic procedure to 'trust' in these coins. The 'Pyx' originally was a boxwood chest in which the coins were deposited for the time to be tested and presented to a jury.

of trust are 'really' present and focus on the credibility of this invention: Is paper trustworthy?

If *value is based upon reputation*, it becomes questionable and thereby the whole 'flow of currency' doubtful because 'reputation' is a 'social construal' (not only a 'construction'). The condition of reality of a reputation is, then, a kind of trust in advance. A 'given paper' is trustful perhaps, e.g., if the King has signed it and if it therefore is trustworthy like the King's power. But a paper signed by a private bureau of change, can it be trustworthy in advance?

If value is current like a flow, it may be liquid like the flow of signs and significations. This means: *currency is in the dynamic of dissemination* from its beginning. For all those who trust in 'absolute values,' i.e. in gold only (and silver etc.), currency is only a reason for mistrust. How can we 'trust' in a flow of signs, a value without golden ground (cf. Hörisch 1996)? The change of money (currency instead of coins) is a change of trust – and of substantialism against functionalism. In times of instability of this trust, the substantialism comes back, again and again. The same mistrust reappears in every crisis: the price of gold increases whenever the stocks and currencies decrease. Here one might see the revival of 'substantialism' whenever mere 'functionalism' becomes instable.⁶ That the 'absolute values' are also a question of convention and that they are already a mere appendix to the functional system of currencies and stocks is easily forgotten. To me it seems that a given substance, the materiality of value, nevertheless remains convincing.

The *fabrication of currency* therefore is a moment in the history of inventions. How to produce trust in paper, in mere signs? Here the crucial question reappears: Can trust be 'made' or is it impossible to 'do' so? The question is less clear than it sounds. If there 'is' no trust between people or in this special invention named 'currency,' there is no possibility to 'make' it. But in the theory of interaction or in psychology trust is seen as a task, as work to be done. It is similar to the question of recognition (and in economy: in validity): how is it 'made' if it *is* 'made'?

The task is quite similar to what 'happens' in the *Last Supper* (may it be magic, metaphysics, or speech and pragmatics): transubstantiation (or consecration) of bread and wine into flesh and blood. Or vice versa: in order to understand this 'transformation,' the fabrication of paper-money provides an analogy one might think and worry about. There is mere paper in the beginning and by an authority and a governed process there is made valuable money out of it by quite special means and procedures. On the surface it

⁶ May it be that in times of instability of the 'trust in the Church,' the trust in person of the pastor becomes basic again? And what would follow, if faith is based on the trust in him (not in Him)?

looks quite simple: printing money is just like printing books. This already is a transubstantiation of paper into value (perhaps more obvious in the fabrication of Thora-scrolls by scribing, which are buried in the end of their life). But while there is a lot of mistrust in 'flesh and blood,' trust in money seems not necessary (as unnecessary as in gravitation). But this is wrong, of course. The crisis of the Euro, triggered by the crisis of a state (Greece in spring 2010), demonstrates this. And it demonstrates how trust in the economic and political stability of one state can become decisive for the trust in a whole currency. Therefore I suppose that 'no trust is needed' is only a rule for the financial system, a rule to hide the latent need for trust in the whole system. In times of crisis this trust (or even the unnecessary trust) collapses. And then the Leviathan reappears.

7. Example: Cult of Coins and Christian Cult

The magic in printing money is its mystery: the fabrication of value by the process, i.e., making validity out of facticity. Recall Habermas' question concerning the constitution of law: how to get validity of law out of a merely factual process? How, where, when and whence comes the trust in this mysterious fabrication? Later in Stephenson's book, a Jesuit Father is reflecting about the invention of currency and coins in general:

'Money, and all that comes with it, disgusts me,' said Father Édouard de Gex [...]. 'Within living memory, men and women of noble birth did not even have to *think* about it. Oh, there were rich nobles and poor, just as there were tall and short, beautiful and ugly. But it would never have entered the mind of even a *peasant* to fantasize that a penniless Duke was any less a Duke, or that a *rich whore* ought to be made a Duchess. Nobles did not handle money, or speak of it; if they were guilty of *caring* about it, they took pains to hide it, as with any other vice. Men of the cloth did not need money, or use it, except for a few whose distasteful duty it was to take the tithes from the poor box. And ordinary honest peasants lived a life blessedly free of money. To nobles, clerics, and peasants – the only people needed or wanted in a decent Christian Realm – coins were as alien, eldritch, inexplicable as communion wafers to a Hindu.

They are, I believe, an artifact of the pagan necromancers of the Romans, talismans of the subterranean Cult of Mithras, which St. Constantine, after his conversion to the True Faith, somehow forgot to eradicate, even as the temples of the idolaters were being pulled down or made over into churches.

The makers, users, and hoarders of money were a cult, a cabal, a parasitical infestation, enduring through many ages, no more Christian than the Jews – indeed, many *were* Jews. They convened in a few places like Venice, Genoa, Antwerp, and Seville, and spun round the globe a web or net-work of links along which money flowed, in feeble and fitful pulses. This was repugnant but endurable. But what has happened of late is monstrous. The money-cult has spread faster across what used to be Christendom than the faith of Mahomet did across Araby' (Stephenson 2004, 567).

The Jesuit Father sees the rise of money as the rise of a new religion: the 'coin-cult' in competition with the Christian cult. *God or gold*, and actually: *Christianity or currency* is the ultimate alternative – a question of ultimate concern. And the Jesuit Father's emotions, his "concern-based construals" (Roberts 2003, 64f.), are quite clear: not only mistrust in currency but hate against this heresy.

That in which we trust makes the difference between the coin-cult and the Christian cult. But this alternative is, of course, misleading. We usually have no problems to 'Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's.' Furthermore, if one constructs this alternative (by a misleading construal), one bewitches reason *and* faith. The coins and the currency are exaggerated and turned into a medium competitive with faith. Is this evidence for the difference between trust (in currency) and faith (in God)? Or is it a sufficient reason not to speak of trust in questions of currency?

There may be no alternative, but at least some conflicts in trust. The question of ultimate concern is a test for one's concern and 'construal.' Take, for example, the churches in the times of decreasing Christianity. The churches in Germany are concerned with the management of problems resulting from the financial crisis. Their 'construals' are evidently 'concern-based,' and the key concern is the lack of money. The commissions and administrations mainly construe their world in regard to the shortage of money. And, of course, there are always good reasons for such considerations. However, if the idea that the ultimate concern of the institution is self-preservation takes over more and more, and if the ultimate concern becomes money, one might think that they are somehow bewitched. Does it show a lack of trust or rather an abundance of trust in money?

8. Ways of Viewing Trust: Trust in the Making – Trust in Becoming

The Jesuit Father's worldview – or 'trustview' – is quite traditional. This tradition reaches from Judaism and Christianity up to the trilogy of media-theory by Jochen Hörisch (cf. Hörisch 1992; Hörisch 1996; Hörisch 1999). It goes from the host in the communion via the coins and currency to CD and DVD as symbols for the communication by means of new media. It is a succession in success: The media one uses are symptoms of one's trust. In what one trusts is symptomatic of one's 'trust-system.' And it is relevant to remark that there is no 'justified true trust,' no sufficient reason to trust in a certain medium. Otherwise than knowledge as a justified true belief, trust is never based on sufficient reasons.

Hörisch called this problem the question of ontosemiology (*Ontosemiologie*): How does *being* become *meaning* or *meaningful*? One good answer may be Cassirer's: being becomes meaningful by means of symbolic conciseness (*symbolische Prägnanz*), i.e., when something is seen or perceived as meaningful. This is the less ontological and more epistemic and hermeneutical answer: being becomes meaningful by pre-predicative synthesis, i.e., by the ascription and recognition of sense and meaning in and by one's perception. If such a synthesis is 'fabricated' in perception, then one may see the paper as money, even before any considerations concerning justification or sufficient reasons.⁷

Yet, this mysterious union of being and meaning remains nevertheless a riddle or even a secret. Think of contemporary political philosophy which claims that even modern states need secrets as the (empty) center of their legitimation and recognition. The decisive question then is: how is such a perception established? The conditions of perception become questionable.

The traditional Protestant answer would be: perception is shaped and grounded by the Holy Spirit. The good Samaritan is not 'good' in himself. His intervention is not his achievement, but he only shows the presence of the Spirit by which he is acting compassionately. Thus, trust and faith can never be a merit, but are always an unconditioned event and gift. Thereby the whole quest for explanation and origination is rejected by pointing to the unpredictable origin, the Spirit. Does this help to understand trust in subjectivity and sociality? I guess it does not.

There *is* trust, not made, but '*in the making*.' This means: it is *in becoming* without being made. Therein trust is like God: in becoming. It is *in* our making, without being made. But how are we to understand this mysterious ingredient of ourselves and our social practices?

An easy answer would be: we understand it *by the form of life*. This would presuppose that something is given, a life and its form that is to be understood. This is no 'retrojection' (Peirce), but a mere presupposition, sometimes a convincing and satisfying one. But how does it 'come to life' and 'become a form of life' that we accept paper as 'money,' bread as 'flesh' or a declaration as 'law'?

Habermas' answer was that validity emerges by a procedure and its rules as, e.g., in law-giving or money-printing. Habermas' answer resembles the Roman-Catholic answer, at least a bit: we trust in the sacraments because they are valid *ex opere operato*, i.e., by following the rules of production. Thereby the reception becomes the mere ratification of the correct procedure. This way, an already *given* trust may become *actualized* in and by reception. But this way no trust *arises*.

⁷ Again, this cannot be constructed in a 'solipsistic' manner. It is a social process and a cultural construal.

What about the relations to institutions and techniques? Are they like gravitation: without any need to trust? Paradigms of trust 'in the making' may be money (currency and stocks), diplomacy (states and their interaction), technique or institutions. However, the main problem is that there is no concrete person, no 'other' you can ask and see, no interaction with someone who demands your recognition and trust. Cultural techniques such as money and institutions can work or function without *personal* trust. In economic interactions or in the court one does not trust and one does not have to. Even the defender does not have to trust his client and vice versa. One merely has to follow the procedure and the given rules of the law. Just like currency, the system of law claims to work without the need of personal trust.

Nonetheless, there is a strong demand and claim *not to mistrust*. You nonetheless need a certain (hypothetical or methodological) trust in the whole system that it not be corrupt. This silent claim shows what Bourdieu argued for, namely that culture needs 'social capital' like trust, otherwise a culture would collapse. If one could not presuppose certain self-evident relations and a certain degree of trust, this would give rise to an extensive practice of concluding contracts. If a culture were designed as a culture without trust and without need for trust, this culture would be turned into a machine, into a perfect clockwork. But even a Swiss watch needs your trust if you want to rely on it. And no 'brand,' not even one 'made in Switzerland,' can replace the necessary trust.

If, in following the rules, certain effects arise which give good reasons to mistrust the whole process and the rules, what shall we do then? In economics, media and politics, and sometimes as well in the administration of churches, this problem arises. The rules, forms and procedures can become suspicious; recall, e.g., Kierkegaard's critique of the church of his time. We never trust merely in rules, just as little as we trust in propositions. Trust is *not* a propositional attitude, just as little as faith.

9. Given Trust and Lack of Trust: To Give What You Do Not Have

I would suggest that trust is a 'pre-propositional' and 'pre-predicative synthesis.' To put it in line with Husserl: trust is a *passive synthesis* like association or affects. This implies that trust is originally not 'in the making' like advertising, diplomacy or public relations. These are either simulations or they merely facilitate trust. 'Trust-building means' (*vertrauensbildende Maßnahmen*) cannot build up trust. Still, trust is 'in the making' in the sense of being present and effective in all our making, all our agency. Once again, think of the Samaritan. But to be 'in the making' says that trust is *in becoming*.

ing. It is the *performance* between agents and patients. Trust is not an object of fabrication. It cannot be made, despite any efforts of advertising. It is, rather, a non-intentional side-effect of pragmatics, i.e., it is in the *use* or in the practice. If a promise of value, of function, of reliability, etc., stands the test of time, it is kept in and by the pragmatics.

Trust is a *gift* in the special sense that it is impossible to 'give' it in an 'active' and intentional sense. If you trust, you 'give' trust in the sense that you give what you do not have. What you give you may receive in and by giving. So your trust is not your action, but an *event*. Whereby is it made possible – by your possibility and power to give? By the reliability of the other and his appearance (this way advertising is made)? Or by the atmosphere or actual conditions (this way event-shopping is put on stage)?

The actual origin of trust remains mysterious. Psychology explains it in a circular way: there has to exist already a sense of basic trust. If there is no basis, no further trust in others will grow. It is similar to the idea of basic natural revelation: if there is no natural cognition of God, further cognition and revelation will be impossible. Then there is presupposed a dark origin of what is later to be explained and demanded.

It would be less 'archeological' and circular, if trust were seen as a phenomenon of 'emergence,' i.e., a basic dimension of sociality which emerges without an author or origin. But that is an explanation without explanatory force. Whatever emerges comes out of chaos to cosmos. No one will agree with this, if he or she is not already convinced. A weaker explanation would be 'mimesis' in the sense of Wittgenstein's idea of learning language and religion. You participate in social practices and forms of life, and thereby you learn to trust. But then, what is to be learned had previously been taken for granted. And can trust be learned like social interaction? I would hesitate.

If *there is already trust*, as there is Bourdieu's 'social capital,' it is easy to explain the actual forms and modes of trust. They are actualizations of the potentiality given in the existing sociality. The problem, however, is not how the potential becomes actual or what it is that may be done in cases where there is no trust. What can be done if trust is destroyed? The basic problem is similar to the 'lack of moral sense': the *lack* of trust. It follows that it is not to be presupposed what is to be understood. The problem seems to be similar to the riddle of forgiveness: if you trust, you 'do' so, but without *making* what you are doing. There is no sovereign author of forgiving. Is there an autonomous author of your trust? Are *you* the author of your trust? I doubt this. Who may be the author, if *there is* trust? Or is trust without beginning, but nevertheless comes sometimes to an end?

Trust is a way of life based on insufficient reasons, and trust is the answer to the insufficiency of reason in regard to life. If you do not trust, no reason will convince you. It is not open to a deliberative choice. Therefore I would speak of the *in-ability to trust* because to trust is not 'my capacity' or ability.

What we cannot 'do' is what we cannot leave aside. We cannot *not* trust, but we cannot 'do' it by ourselves either. We have to do what we cannot *do*. This remains a severe problem. I suppose that, even though we cannot 'make' trust, *we trust nevertheless*. Trust *is* always 'nevertheless.' *This* is the mystery, or I might better say: the *gift*, neither given by the one nor the other in their interaction.

Perhaps it is helpful to recall the concept of 'inter-passivity.' The professional mourners in oriental funerals are mourning instead of the relatives. That is the original idea of inter-passivity by Žižek and Pfaller. May trust be something similar? 'The others' trust in currency, in bread and wine, or in techniques – and that is *why* we do it as well? This idea would resemble Wittgenstein's view of trust. Why do we accept this habit of doing, this form of life? The problem remains: trust could, on this view, not be distinguished from a mere habit of agency. But to trust indeed, not simply to *do as if* one would trust, is thoroughly different. It remains at least *invisible* whether one *really* trusts or not. From 'outside,' one can only see how we live, e.g., that we accept money and receive the communion bread. Whether one really trusts in it remains opaque and questionable. It is the same with faith, I suppose. And this invisibility or opacity is of course an epistemic problem, but it is also a 'grace' like the 'windowlessness' of the individual. What would happen if a sovereign or an institution could 'judge' about my trust? This should remain God's privilege – gracefully.

10. Making Possible the Impossible?

Thus, 'trustbuilding' is impossible. There is neither a sovereign author nor an institution which could function as ultimate 'trustmaker.' It is similar with 'faithbuilding': the expression in itself is nonsense. The only thing we may be able to do is to avoid trust-destruction. In social contexts, controlling is mostly destructive of trust. This implies that one should be skeptical against skepticism, i.e., against the escalation of mistrust. But how can the (still) given trust be saved and how are we sure not to 'save' only phenomena but trust itself, if it is in danger of being destroyed? In ethics, the solution is called *supererogation*. Among it is the well-known *donum superadditum*.

All strategies of 'building' trust in the stock market and in currency are looking for trust as means to an end. If they are not looking for a revival of superstition (e.g., in neo-liberal ideology or in the idea that the benefit or salvation of the postmodern state are hedge funds), they are looking for hypothetical trust: trust as method of social interaction.

Here it becomes obvious that faith is *not* trust in the methodological sense because faith is not a means to an end, not a method for the cleared interaction between God and man. It becomes obvious as well that looking for

'faith-building' is superstitious in seeing faith as means to an end (e.g., to cure the financial crisis of churches). This attempt is misguided, and skepticism here is the better way to trust – by not trusting in the methods of faith- or trust-building.

Nevertheless, one can encourage and favor the possibility of the impossible. One can try to make trust less impossible, e.g. by making it less risky. This is the way most states deal with the actual lack of trust in the bank-system and monetary exchange: they take the risk of credits as a compensation for the loss of reputation of some banks.

This is exactly a way that is impossible for Protestant churches: they do not play trust-games, but only one. Roman Catholics may think that the church is taking the risk to guarantee that the believer's belief is correct and therefore, the Roman *congregatio fidei* may be the institution that takes the risk of deciding about the truth. But to Protestants, again, this is impossible.

This risk or danger cannot be compensated or supplemented by an institution. In trustful *faith*, no delegation or inter-passive trust is possible. Further, Protestant churches cannot act here like the Roman Church. So much is evident. But then, how to favor the conditions of trust – by supererogation? I suppose that the question is wrongly posed. The risk to trust is like Kierkegaard's leap: impossible to do, but impossible not to risk as well. It is more a passion than an action. That is why I have called it a 'passive synthesis.' But it is a passionate passivity, or a dangerous gift. One may be deluded, and trust can be dashed like hopes. And what about the one who finds trust and 'gets' it? Finding trust is no less dangerous because one comes into the position to have to avoid disappointing the other. Yet, describing the trust-relation as a danger and obligation can lead to an 'ethification' or moralization. Trust is initially and finally not an act. Therefore, trust is not primarily a question of ethics but more of passion and passivity: not mainly of *logos* or *ethos*, but of *pathos* (cf. Stoellger 2010). This may be one reason why the theory of faith is an implicit theory of trust – and theology a reliable trust-theory.

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Trust, Sociality, Selfhood

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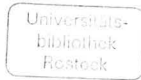
Preface

This book originates from a conference entitled “Trust, Sociality, Selfhood,” which took place at the Danish National Research Foundation’s Center for Subjectivity Research, University of Copenhagen, on December 4–5, 2008, as part of a research project on “Trust, Conflict, Recognition.” The articles collected in *Trust, Sociality, Selfhood* are not proceedings but a selection of re-written texts from the conference including additional texts by authors invited to contribute to the book.

We are pleased to have the work published in the Mohr Siebeck “Religion in Philosophy and Theology” series and wish to thank Henning Ziebritzki and Ilse König for their valuable assistance. We are indebted to The Velux Foundation for financially supporting both our research project on trust and this publication. Further, we would like to express our gratitude to two people who were indispensable for finalizing the manuscript: thank you to Adam Loughnane for careful English language corrections, and to Rasmus Riis for establishing the camera-ready copy and the indexes.

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Table of Contents

<i>Arne Grøn and Claudia Welz</i> Introduction: Trust in Question	1
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I. Basic Trust?

<i>Arne Grøn</i> Trust, Sociality, Selfhood	13
<i>Philippe Rochat</i> Trust in Early Development	31
<i>Claudia Welz</i> Trust as Basic Openness and Self-Transcendence	45

II. Trust and Personhood

<i>Karen Jones</i> Counting On One Another	67
<i>Anthony J. Steinbock</i> Temporality, Transcendence, and Being Bound to Others in Trust	83
<i>Günter Figal</i> Trusting in Persons and Things	103

III. Self and Other in Trust and Distrust

<i>Gry Ardal</i> Judging about Trustworthiness	115
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<i>Ingolf U. Dalferth</i> 'In God We Trust': Trust, Mistrust and Distrust as Modes of Orientation.....	135
<i>Philipp Stoellger</i> 'In God We Trust': Trust in the Making – and in Becoming.....	153
IV. Transformative Trust?	
<i>Burkhard Liebsch</i> Violated Trust and the Self: A Negativistic Approach	173
<i>Lars Hertzberg</i> On Being Trusted.....	193
<i>Anne Marie Pahuus</i> Creative Trust	205
Notes on Contributors.....	217
Indexes	221

Introduction: Trust in Question

Arne Grøn and Claudia Welz

Questions of Trust

Trust has become a prominent theme across various disciplines. It has attracted attention in current debates regarding how societies prosper and change, and how individuals lead their lives. Trust seems to provide a basis both for social life and for the individual person orienting him- or herself in leading his or her life. Yet, trust does not provide an unquestioned basis for human relations.

The issue of trust goes to the core of both sociality and selfhood. Trust appears to be of critical importance both to human interaction and to becoming a self. Although trust is *en vogue*, an account that focuses on trust, sociality, and selfhood, and that discusses the sense in which trust is basic, has so far been missing. The book in hand aims to offer such an account in a multifaceted approach, which brings together perspectives not only from various philosophical traditions, but also from developmental psychology, sociology, and theology.

The idea behind the book is that the importance of trust not only illustrates the social and individual character of human existence but also opens up the issue of sociality *and* selfhood: how are humans both social beings and selves? This question is reflected in difficulties in defining trust: trust is a deep personal response or attitude on the one hand, and trust has to do with a social atmosphere on the other hand.

Trust is in question in various situations. When we discover that someone takes advantage of the trust we have shown, we not only feel cheated but also let down. If the one abusing our trust is a friend who has deliberately played with our feelings, we may come to see the relation in a different light. It has changed and is no longer a relation of friendship. Moreover, trust also becomes an urgent question in a larger social perspective. For example, it may be claimed that the realities of the current financial crisis also have to do with trust or a lack thereof. The crisis is to no small degree about expecta-