

**Y., -P. Hayrynen:**

**COMMENTS ON THE MESSAGE 22.08.2000**

**B. DESCLAUX/Versailles.Fr**

1. C. Mendel & l'individu sans appartenances - or the individual within new demarcations?

- Indeed, what you say about Gerard Mendel and his idea of '**l'individu sans appartenances**' is interesting. Still I think that 'postmodern society' - if that now is a correct definition of our current European reality; Bourdieu claims that the term 'postmodern' rather pictures the American condition - has not destructed all appartenances which you mentioned (family, class, and ?). But it is creating new demarcations aside of the old differentiation. These 'appartenances' are related to the current labour market situation and not to the differentiation of jobs and classes, as in traditional society. Maybe what Norbert Elias comprehends with extreme consumption society - in which people have no 'We' and do not expect any social continuance after their deaths - comes close to this.

It may be however so that demarcations among the people whom the vocational counselors meet are primarily caused by the changing labour market situation in which 'mobility', 'flexibility' and momentaneous talents are in the first place. Only a part of people fulfils these new demands and possess the respective labour market dexterity (the principal ability in late capitalist society). I have analyzed these new demarcations in the article (The Magic Borders, attached file 'MAGIC2.doc) which will be published in a book on our eastern borders and their symbolic significance (as you understand these questions of borders occupy researchers of small countries such as Finland or Austria, who feel that their terrains are located on new the cultural and political boundaries of Europe).

2. 'Employability' and primary social acceptability: a new social dexterity?

I have in that connection elaborated Philip Wechsler's early formulation of 'Semiotic Society' a bit further, being not content with the original 'bifurcated model' of semiotic society and trying to indicate that at least three different levels of "employability" exist in emerging late-capitalist society: in these societies the free mobility of money, commodities and manpower tend to be the principal dictate. The idea "Fais ce que tu veux" is tragic if applied to the young people who already possess a minimum degree of 'employability' (employabilité ?) or social acceptability (those without necessary 'flexibility', without an ability to get employed; and with 'improper' social backgrounds, addresses, skin colours, or names referring to a foreign' origin).

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This 'socially undesirable' group represents the 'They' of modern society - their self-concept is an enforced idea of oneself as an 'outsider'. They form a most difficult clientele for guidance - or for social educators, surveillers, etc. A deep conflict of identity stays within their 'Self'. In fact, the family project (the significance of which Bourdieu's team describes in 'La Misére') , the peer culture, the chances which the school promised to them, the TV advertisement, and their declined opportunities in the labour market seem to act as diverging and conflicting forces in their consciousness.

### 3. Only an elite fraction can 'faire ce que on veut' - others have more or less enforced choices?

So, I would not take the 'fais ce que tu voudras' as the maxim of guidance - neither seem you to be happy with this principle - it will apply only to people in the 'First Class' who possess what I call the 'primary social acceptability' in a 'globalizing' market soxciety. But I admit that it is not very easy to find solutions - as Bourdieu states in "La Misére du Monde" the social institutions with which the people of the 'Second Class' are in touch have inferior resources and hopeless tasks if the economy permanently creates these social demarcations; i.e. people who have no opportunities rather than continuous unemployment.

About the possibilities you mention as a solution of Mendel's paradigm the pre-existence seems to be very close to the classical free-market model of guidance: it still is strong as the fundamental model of the Anglo-American type of counseling and selection (e.g., Super, Holland etc). In fact, 'faire ce que tu voudrais' is also a basic principle of the free market theory. Almost all individualist models of the self are close to the free market paradigm in that they describe the 'disengaged individual', not the subject which is an element of the social networks since the birth (see Pizzorno's thesis in my 'INETOP' paper).

### 4. Construction of abilities in activity -

It is interesting what you write about the 'construction' and the controversy Naville/Pierron. Personally I think that **abilities are formed in social activities, particularly in those activities for the implementation of which an ability is necessary** (I know that this goes back to Aristotle - 'De Anima' - but the idea has been elaborated by a Russian psychologist). A second model is the language as the primary universal ability of people.

I suppose that abilities are generated **both** in activities - not necessarily job activities - **and** in communication. In addition to these two general forms of abilities a third type seems to exist which is intuitive social experience, modelled in one's family and school environment and among the peers. One's status in the family is as important as the social status of the

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family (Foucault did not continue his family's project coming a physician or an advocate but did something totally else - maybe it was the counselor in Poitiers who had advised him to become a philosopher and intellectual?). The intuitive preparedness is close to what Bourdieu calls the practical instinct of people who know - often intuitively - a social field and how one should behave in that field. The result is the hermeneutic circle in which people select themselves for certain professional field and the fields - professions and faculties - select candidates who have the 'proper inclination'.

I suppose that at least these four forms of 'general abilities' exist which then get particular forms in different professions:

- the ability to learn in activity (the 'learning by doing');
- the ability to acquire knowledge through different symbolic systems (the 'Epilogue' in my 'INETOP' paper shows how a deaf-blind lady finally developed the ability to 'move in time' as she described it herself);
- the practical intuition or an ability to foresee as 'graphic' or analogical forms what will be consequences of certain action or communication;
- and in work: the ability of a craftsman (Welford), to see subtle differences in the objects of work and to adjust one's work so that the end result is fine. (This means also the classical ability to construct an advance image of what one will do; according to a British archeologist (Oakley) already the Neanderthal people had this fine ability, on which all culture is based in the end).

But two reservations should be made:

First, people do not necessarily learn while repeating an activity or when participating in communication. As Aristotle says also inability (stupidity) grows in activities, since one cannot call a person unable to build before he/she has tried to construct a house ('De Anima');

Second, the abilities which people develop - or are expected to develop - in the new type of 'globalized economy' are not primarily related to general cultural dedication or good workmanship but to an adaptability to changing market conditions: one should be part of 'mobility' and socially acceptable in order to get jobs.

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As far we have professions (I once wrote an article in Swedish 'Death of Professions') any profession includes a block of different and alternating activities. Therefore, all duties can be performed with different alternative aptitudes. I believe that Guichard's DAPPI procedure is good in that sense that he tries to make young people to see that there are plusier ways to get certain type of job, there are several ways to learn

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something (not only the 'school way'), and there are different methods to perform a job as well.

In the higher level of social hierarchy people are even able to modify their duties in accord to their own personality (the so-called self-direction of work). I suppose that in present occupational structure about 60 percent of people have to do jobs the content of which is externally determined. In this case the only thing we can do is to advise them in choices. But the freedom of these choices is usually quite limited if the jobs have a minimal content variation. In this case to get a permanent full-time job in general appears to be the ideal of many. Still, the advertisement gives young people a picture of a swift, mobile, adventurous life awaiting them if they are successful. And educational counselors say that if you have at least 10 years of schooling you will surely get a good professional training and then an interesting job. For too many this does not happen.

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But you are right in that there does not occur any magic self-selection, on the basis of the future and yet unborn abilities. In fact, the American social psychologist Mel Kohn claims that differences in the work situations and statuses indeed create the bulk of differences which are observed in the occupational values and self-concepts. (For example, differences between women and men in occupational values appear not to be 'genetic' but attributable to differences in their work contents, and especially in their positions in the status hierarchy). He refers to Marx who suggested that all facets of personality are created in work.

At least people are not 'ready for occupational careers' before they have entered occupations. Kohn does not take in account the enormous rate of 'anticipatory socialization', however: the young people have some idea of what different jobs are and right or wrongly, they make choices on this basis. So, what guidance can do is apparently to fight the false or one-sided representations of occupational world.

### 5. - and sedimentation of the habitus in all types of social experiences

**How can people actually select occupations if the abilities which are needed in these tasks and even their work-values are developed in the later career only? And is the task of counseling to advise people on how to choose - or is it something else? What this 'else' might literally be?**

I suppose that Bourdieu's theory of 'habitus' gives some illumination to this question. I have directed with Jean Guichard a doctoral dissertation which an Israeli psychologist (Mike Motola) prepares. He compares occupational and educational

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values, plans, wishes, and aesthetic preferences among the samples of Finnish and French students of Gymnasium (le lycée). What he tries to show is that their 'habitus' is formed by three different main factors, gender, the educational streaming in a country, and social background. Once formed the habitus in turn tends to integrate the quite different elements such as the strategy of choice, the degree of risks the young people take, their view of the whole occupational world (the method Guichard has applied, and which I happened to develop some 30 years ago); also their future educational plans, etc. There seems to exist a relationship - not necessarily of a 'causal nature' - between the aesthetic preferences (the 'cultural habitus') and the occupational wishes, which are parts of the same comprehensive system of habitus, often intuitive in their nature.

According to Bourdieu, interviewers (resp. counselors) who do not understand the social reality of their most 'deviating' clients usually ask too simple and 'rational' questions. The questions such as 'why did you choose this occupation' display a 'sound reason' typical of the Middle Class people. I believe that it is this Middle Class illusion which counseling should avoid - at least when its clients do not belong to that class and do not make a normative type of occupational choice. Many American methods of guidance - for example the interest measurement - appear instead to strengthen the stereotypical basis of occupational choice. I suppose that in Europe the counselors are more prudent..

Also national differences existed according to the study of M. Motola but they are often related to the different stream system in Finland and France; the 'cognitive maps' of occupations and even the impact of gender and social class are not drastically dissimilar among the Finnish and the French students, it seems.

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I agree with Bourdieu's idea that people do not actually 'choose' jobs by calculating their opportunities and the 'rate of return' they may have in each profession. Instead, they in a way 'grow' to certain choice; they play a 'natural game of life' instead an artificial game which has clear rational rules. What I claim is that counseling is too often based on clarifying the rules of the labour market.

Behind occupational roles there exist a lot of cultural elements and rudiments of which people are not consciously aware. Bourdieu emphasizes both the 'savoir-vivre' as you say, but also a kind of less definite 'practical intuition' which people possess when playing 'natural social games' (in fact I said this already above). The good word of Donald Super is that people 'somehow gravitate' into the jobs which they perform and do not make any grand decisions.

6. The 'Self' reflects social experiences or voices of a multiple 'Others'; also the 'Voice of authority'

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It can be thought that people's 'Self' reflects their collective experiences - and interpretations - on how social power acts. The power hierarchy creates 'new demarcations' which become interiorized and act as 'imperceptive speakers' in personal awareness. This is why Bakhtin's idea of the self or the internal speech situation of people attracts me step-by-step more. Two of our recent doctoral dissertations, one of a psychotherapist, the other of a municipal physician, have dealt with multivoiced communication between expert and the client.

My interest has been to establish a relationship between the current differentiation - or fragmentation - of society in which power has different and often invisible, 'capillary' forms (as Foucault suggests). I am interested in the way in which the 'Self' of different groups is patterned, even if the social division into the basic groups is more confused today than it was in the culminating era of modernity. This 'sociological emphasis' may be why I have omitted such questions as the original self-feeling of children - the 'I' which is not yet reflecting the social environment and its dialogues. I know that both Bakhtin and Lacan have formulated a 'pre-existential' concept of 'I' but have not felt home with it.

In the 'INETOP paper' I tried to elaborate the multivocal aspect of the self and how it may be applied in counseling although this work stayed at the level of draft (Annex). In my mind has been what can be called a 'network Self', the process in which people name each others, and claim a self-concept from important others. In this way their 'Self' is sedimented and has simultaneously elements of family experiences, school events, discussions with peers. But one cannot avoid the fact that the way in which the labour market are modelled in each country - how much they are based on the idea of incessant mutual competition and how they transmit to people the absolute demands for 'social desirability' - is exhibited in their personal self-premises as well.

### 7. Each person integrates different and even controversial experiences in his/her 'Self'

This kind of 'multivocal identity' reflects, therefore, synchronously various social experiences, but in a conflicted mode. This is why the selfhood of many people is confused or loaded with contrasting elements. (I suppose that these conflictuous modes of self are challenges to guidance and counseling).

The idea of multivocal identity is perhaps reminiscent of what Bernard Lahire has suggested as "l'homme pluriel" - I have not understood all his points, but admit that people are polymorphous (as Freud claimed the libido of the children to be). Since each 'Self' exposes also the surrounding environmental constraints, one should not see the association of

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between psychological indicators as 'causal' relationships (Lahire). Causality exists - claims Lahire - only when the environmental influences are included in the analysis.

### 8. The Idea of the 'Network Self' - and the Risks of 'Multivocal Guidance'

Thus, a 'multivocal Self' is not a voodoo solution for Psychology of Guidance or Therapy. It has its risks as well: people cannot be 'endlessly multivocal' and think with voices of an infinite number of cultural speakers, because in this case their 'I for Myself' will vanish. As Shweder remarks, even multiculturality can be a submitting factor, if one culture has a louder voice than others (see the discussion on 'Cross-Cultural Malaise' in my second article).

Anyway, the Self extends the borders of the individual person, it is in this sense a systemic and relational notion, as Mustafa Emirbayer indicates in an article in American Sociology (1997; 'The Relational Manifesto...'). Emirbayer cites Erwing Goffman whom Bernard Desclaux analyzes in an interesting way (self-representation as the artefact which people have to fabricate): Goffman claims that the objective of psychology cannot be a separate individual but one should study the network of activities in which many people participate and in which they get their 'characteristics'. This is close to Alessandro Pizzorno whom I cited in my INETOP paper.

People truly have the skill of making self-representations, as you propose - but it is a group or a network of people which tests, accepts, or rejects these representations. The final 'self-characteristics' are not always those which people themselves want. Sometimes public power demands people to express themselves with acceptable 'formal language' - their voiced self-representation becomes in this way a part of the official voice, not their genuine self-expression. People may be 'alienated' from the Self which they 'formally' express or try to voice themselves in some non-verbal private activities (cf. Michael Cole, thinking as a form of spontaneous collective activity). This problem of self-alienation is old, dates back to the young Marx, to Laing, or Emmanuele Severino, but still I think we have not dedicated to it a sufficient mental effort since the 1970s. Does it mean that present market and consumption-oriented society no more suffers from the nuissance of etrangement, and is this problem totally unknown to the counselors and psychotherapists today?

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### 9. Guidance - helping to analyze one's habitus or advising to gain social acceptability

I agree with what you speak about professional differentiation and transformation of professions. Having studied intellectuals I have nevertheless found that some ideas of Crozier seem to

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differ from those of mine. What I have asked in the article on 'magic borders' is whether the present type of expanding market system replaces the old differentiation of jobs with the more immediate impact of markets. I suppose that my idea of 'social acceptability' against which people are estimated when seeking employment is close to the notion of 'employability', which refers more to a person's 'market desirability' than his/her actual work-abilities (see also Bourdieu and Wacquant, May 2000; 'Le Monde Diplomatique' and earlier: 'Les Actes de la Recherche', 1997: 'Les Ruses de la Raison Imperialiste').

Thus, guidance and counseling appear to live in a status of mutation: on one side the old professional order and the relatively logical educational system, on the other side the expanding and endlessly mobile market which selects, classifies, and rejects people on its own terms. Shall counseling educate people to the new techniques of 'self-representation' (incl. the techniques of employment seeking behaviour), or advise them to analyze the layers of their own habitus, in order to resolve in this way the conflict of their mind?

I suppose that counselors in the future European situation shall work like ethnopsychologists (in my article I refer to an essay of Tobie Nathan and Sybille de Pury 'Parole publique, parol qui engage' in the book "La Conversation", which I liked much; esp. conclusions pp.167-168). France with its emancipatory political tradition would be an important factor in this new situation (underlining the free flow of ideas), while the Anglo-Saxon or Smithian idea emphasizes free mobility and the 'free selection' of labour force).

The type of counseling I have sketched in my papers - as very fragmentarily would be - as regards as the internal constraints of its clients - to some degree 'political'. An alternative is that counseling will be totally neutral toward what happens in society and the world economy today. Or it may help only those who 'can do what they want'. But even neutrality can be a constraint, as Hegel says - a judge cannot be totally disinterested in questions of justice and injustice, if he/she wants to be a good arbitrator..

### 10. 'Je - Nous- l'État National - le Marché Mondial' - the Relational Ego

So I have commented on your good theses above in a fragmented way. As you see I have perhaps myself moved - as perhaps forced by your secure arguments - from the idea of a 'binary Self' (Je-Nous) toward multivocality of the Self. As I mentioned earlier, I appreciate the trinary (ternaire) model of Serge Moscovici who thinks that between an observator (the I) and the object of evaluation (the O) is also collective or the audience (the They). Our representation of each social object is determined by the continuous and humming everyday discussion in which different standpoints are exposed. Thus, there is no 'I'

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observing independently a separate object, as classical psychology hypothesized.

In Bakhtin's theory of selfhood 'the inner audience' represents the role of the 'They'. However, this audience is usually fragmented.

It may be noted that the Je-Nous connection by Norbert Elias is only one relationship in his formula - he also emphasizes the strengthening role of State institutions, nationality, and later he speaks of our membership in the consumption market, which may pattern people's awareness in developed consumption societies. If the 'Modern State' - internalized in our selfhood - happens to collapse 'the mere chaos occupies the world', as says William Butler Yeats. If the credibility of the Modern State - in Scandinavia, the Welfare State - declines, people will be confused, their political participation decreases, their interest in common affairs drops. The mere 'I-Us' relationship would signify a clan society, I am afraid, such as we can see in Caucasus, ex-Yugoslavia, or Ethiopia.

Anyway, I wish that counseling would also occupy with the macroquestions related to our economic and political destiny. I have in my mind the shadow side of what Jeffrey Alexander calls the "discourse of democratic society" and what he also has described (see Magic2.doc). However this may be the 'Self' is relational concept: it includes our group identity, our role as citizens, and our individuality as well. I like to use the expression 'They' to denote the people who feel themselves to be peripheral or disaccepted in society where they live. But I understand that you delineate with the ternaire concept of 'Self' the network in which the social self is formed - and I sympathize with your definition.

To end this declaration I hope to have comprehended correctly your theses. I shall not handle here the question how counseling 'should' react to the new situation of globality - as intellectuals we should observe it, discuss about it and criticize it if necessary. In small countries there is an illusion that one can influence on society and its premises - we are 'mad' as once stated my British colleague.

**With best wishes to your important trajectory as academic teacher,**

**Y.-P. H.**