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CULTURE, SELF-FORMATION AND COMMUNITY-BUILDING
The *Bildungsideal* from the Perspective of the Intellectual History of Civil Sociability

Christian humanism was defined by its interest in the antique heritage, rediscovering the significance of the arts and rhetoric for both philosophy and for the humanities, as they were understood in modernity. Opposed to the self-lashing attitude of Augustinian Christianity that presents human beings as already corrupted by their guilt and as always in the need of suppressing their original nature, in Christian humanism the person appears as a creature always potentially perfectible.

BILDUNG: ITS HISTORY AND ITS NORMATIVE CLAIM

It is hopeless to find, in the literature that interprets the revolt of the twentieth century, a consolidated definition of culture and art, which would suit all existing forms of artistic practice. Most people think in Wittgenstein's terms that there is only a family resemblance among different agents and games of art.[1] Since the birth of high modernity it is impossible to grasp what is regarded in the German tradition as a philosophical account of art and beauty. Neither will this present paper dare to undertake anything like that. This paper is nothing more than an exercise in intellectual history: it attempts to "excavate" the anachronistic notion of *Bildung* by testing a hypothesis that the notion in question might serve as a means to reinvigorate and update an important traditional dialogue which might be helpful to assess both the philosophical and the social relevance of culture, irrespective of the particular conditions of any given society. However, besides being an "archaeological find," *Bildung* also offers a normative claim. For the moment, in an adumbrated presentation, this claim can be framed in the following way: the eighteenth-century concept of *Bildung*, which was built on both classical and Christian antecedents, may be used to point out two important social functions of culture. First, it enables us to once again think about artistic creativity, as well as about audience responses to it, as aiming at self-formation, and at the end of the day, at its self-perfection. Second, but not independently from this first point, it helps us to realise the significance of culture's useful role in making members of the community

[1] See Daniel A. K a u f m a n, "Family Resemblances, Relationalism, and the Meaning of 'Art'," *British Journal of Aesthetics* 47, no. 3 (2007): 280–97 (available at https://www.missouristate.edu/assets/phi/Family_Resemblances_Relationalism_and_the_Meaning_of_Art.pdf).

more socially responsible, and inculcating both a political and social sense within the whole of society, which can lead its members to be more sociable and more ready to act for the public good.

It is important to warn the reader that in this paper what is called the *Bildungsideal* of art and culture does not refer to all potential cultural practices. This paper does not want to suggest that the above two aspects are the only aspects to be raised in connection with (either historical or contemporary) artistic phenomena. Neither does this paper want to suggest that the concept of *Bildung* can only be interpreted as referring to cultural phenomena, in other words, that this concept is suitable to find all the distinguishing features of artistic activity. This paper only wants to argue that these questions can be raised in connection with a well defined circle of artistic phenomena, self-formation, and (or) the ideal of advanced sociability. Furthermore, in connection with this, the concept of *Bildung* has an explanatory power even for today. To put it differently, it seems to be suitable to support the wishes of members of the art world to gain social legitimacy, and it might also be an important measure for individual and communal cultural education.

What follows is an overview or sketch providing the conceptual history of *Bildung*, which relies on the works of respected philosophers, such as Gadamer's account of *Bildung* in his *magnum opus* (where he analyses the guiding concepts of humanism), György Márkus' reconstruction of the relationship between culture and modernity, and Raymond Geuss' short exercise in conceptual history.[2] Concerning the historical section, we shall pick out three separate moments from European history. First, we will examine the ancient Roman concept of culture. This will be followed by a sketch of the Christian-medieval notions of formation. Finally, we will examine the Christian-humanist and enlightened use of it (largely from the art-historical period of the French Renaissance and of the age of Enlightenment). After these historical epochs, we will have a look at probably the best known conceptualisation of this *Bildungsideal*, in the thought of Wilhelm von Humboldt. In these historical contexts our background questions will be: a) how to reconcile one's individual and communal sense of identity in that very practice, and b) what is the relationship between the internal world of the individual and the external world outside of the agent (including the natural and the social universe). Also, we shall see if there is any difference between the way the natural sciences and the humanities look at the two relationships mentioned.

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[2] See Hans-Georg G a d a m e r, *Truth and Method*, trans. G. Barden and J. Cumming (London: Sheed & Ward, 1975), 9–18; György M á r k u s, "Kultúra, egy fogalom keletkezése és tartalma," in György Márkus, *Kultúra és Modernitás* (Budapest: T-Twins, 1992), 9–41; Raymond G e u s s, "Kultur, Bildung, Geist," in Raymond Geuss, *Morality, Culture, and History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 29–50.

PHILOSOPHY AS THE CULTIVATION OF THE SOUL

The concept of *Bildung* is known from the German theoretical literature—therefore one should be careful not to mix it up with the English term "buildung."[3] While in the German term *Bildung* we find the root of the word "picture" or "image" (*Bild*), behind the etymology of "building" there is the verb "to build."[4] According to Geuss, at the turn of the eighteenth to the nineteenth century, there were three terms with approximately the same meaning: culture (*Kultur*), formation (*Bildung*), and spirit (*Geist*). The field of meaning of these three words partly overlapped, but there were also important dissimilarities between them. As it is not possible to assess the nuances of the history of German philosophy here, it seems to be enough if we observe the close links between the *Bildungsideal* and the concept of culture. By recovering the *Bildung*-dimension of culture here, we shall discover the sense in which the ideal gives a clue to interpret a certain type of cultural activity.

We need to go back at least to the Romans to find the starting point of our story, where we confront the concept of *colere*. The field of meaning of this term is summed up by Márkus the following way: "*Colere* originally means to take care of, to nurse, to cultivate (mainly in the sense of agriculture), but it also meant to dwell, decorate or grace, worship or honour."[5] In this sense it was related to the most ancient types of human activity: cultivating the land, dwelling and adoring the God(s) used to be primordial in almost all developing human communities.[6] As we shall see, the fact that our term "culture" was

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[3] For an introduction to the topic, see Klaus P. H a n s e n, *Kultur und Kulturwissenschaft. Eine Einführung* (Tübingen: Francke, 2011).

[4] Geuss relies on Rudolf Vierhaus who explains the German word "Bild" with reference to image (or symbol), and explains *Bildung* the following way: "to give form or image to something, or the result of this process. Opposed to this, the word "build" has an Indo-European root, with the meaning: "zu wohnen" (Rudolf V i e r h a u s, "Bildung," in *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe: Historisches Lexikon zur politisch-sozialen Sprache in Deutschland*, vol. 1 (A–D), ed. R. Koselleck, Ch. Meier (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1972), 508–51). György Márkus most probably refers to Gadamer, when he claims: "Bildung is an old-German noun, which can be traced back to the word 'bilden' (to form, to create). But it is also closely connected the noun 'Bild,' which means image or likeness" (M á r k u s, "Kultúra, egy fogalom keletkezése és tartalma," 24).

[5] M á r k u s, "Kultúra, egy fogalom keletkezése és tartalma," 13f. As one can see, in this phase both the meaning "to cultivate" and "to dwell" belonged to the term. For more on the Roman meaning of it, see Joseph N i e d e r m a n n, *Kultur, Werden und Wandlungen des Begriffs und seiner Ersatzbegriffe von Cicero bis Herder* (Firenze: Bibliopolis, 1941).

[6] It seems natural to refer here to the connection supposed by Heidegger between the Greek term "poesis" and the simple activity of dwelling (see Martin H e i d e g g e r, "… Poetically Man Dwells …," in Martin Heidegger, *Poetry, Language, Thought*, trans. A. Hofstadter (New York: Harper & Row, 1971), 209–27). This lecture, held in 1951, completes the line of thought presented in Heidegger's essay *Building Dwelling Thinking* (see Martin H e i d e g g e r, *Building Dwelling Thinking*, 141–60).

first related to the ancient activities of cultivating the land will decide a lot in our own understanding of the moral implications of this concept. This is because it includes an ancient consideration that will be emphasized by Fichte in connection with culture. As he saw it, the German people succeeded in saving this primordiality (*Ursprünglichkeit*), which served as a guarantee of their words' honesty, purity and honour.[7] The thought is based on Herder's assumption of *Volksgeist* (the spirit of a people), which supposedly determines the development potentials of a given people and which is itself in need of defence, to counterbalance the corrupting influences of progress. This proves to be a very popular idea, establishing what was going to be called German "historicism," and taken over by Fichte, who "could distinguish the Germans as an original nation that, unlike others (e.g., the French), had not lost touch with the original genius (*Geist*) transmitted through its speech."[8]

This attitude, which looks with high esteem upon the forefathers, but which is a particularly modern and German view, relies on a long tradition. A similar approach to the wisdom of the past is already present in the writings and speeches by Cicero (who was, by the way, one of the first theoreticians of culture). He was the one who—among other loci in his book *The State*—theoretically established the doctrine of the forefathers' wisdom. According to Márkus, the function of this doctrine is to secure some sort of unity in an empire inhabited by a number of different nationalities, by providing a cultural tradition which sums up the common knowledge expected to be part of the identity of each and every citizen as members of the Roman *res publica*.

Cicero's culture, however, is not simply to initiate the Roman citizen into the common past of the community, but it also prescribes for the individual a program of self-cultivation, in other words, of the cultivation of (mostly) his soul (*cultura animi*). This is primarily for those who wish to join the elite destined to lead the community. This program—which is labelled by Márkus as Aristotelian in its origin, to which we can add a Platonic-Socratic element—is on the final account built on the assumption that from the perspective of communal political leadership philosophy can be quite useful. Because philosophy is, from this perspective, not much more than a way to achieve the cultivation of the soul: "… philosophy is the culture of the soul."[9] The peasant cultivates

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[7] See Johann Gottlieb F i c h t e, "Seventh Address: A Closer Study of the Originality and Characteristics of a People," in Johann Gottlieb Fichte, *Addresses to the German Nation*, trans. G.A. Kelly (New York and Evanston: Harper & Row Publishing, 1968), 92–129 (available at http://ghdi.ghi-dc.org/pdf/eng/12_EnlightPhilos_Doc.8_English.pdf).

[8] Georg G. I g g e r s, *The German Conception of History: The National Tradition of Historical Thought from Herder to the Present* (Middletown, Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 1983), 41.

[9] C i c e r o, *Tusculan Disputations*, Book 2: "On Bearing Pain," V, §13, trans. A.P. Peabody (available at http://www.john-uebersax.com/plato/pain.htm). Cf. M á r k u s, "Kultúra, egy fogalom keletkezése és tartalma," 14.

his land in order to make it fertile; the same way the innocent soul, too, needs cultivation in order to flourish. Culture in this particular sense means the cultivation of the soul.

BILDUNG AS *IMAGO DEI*

The next episode from the conceptual history of *Bildung*, or culture, that we look at already belongs to a wholly different era dominated by Christian thought. This time we rely on Hans-Georg Gadamer and on a French philosopher, Pierre Hadot, as our guides. It was Márkus who presented the Renaissance concept of *Bildung* as if it was opposed to scholastic thought.[10] However, at another place, he himself emphasizes that it was in fact as a secularisation of the self-formation propounded by the Christian tradition that the enlightened concept of *Bildung* was born.[11] In our story, as in Gadamer's *magnum opus* or in Samuel Pufendorf's theory quoted by Márkus, the humanist concept of *Bildung* is inseparable from the Christian teaching on self-formation. In order to justify this claim, first we have to return to the concept of *formatio*, and then to refer to the Christian version of the tradition of philosophy as spiritual exercise, reconstructed by Hadot. In light of these historical reconstructions it shall be argued that in the conception of Christian humanism—as opposed to the secularised version of it—an important role is played by an understanding of the human being as *imago Dei*.

Gadamer himself writes about the Christian context of *Bildung* in a somewhat shallow way, following a German doctoral dissertation about the history of the concept.[12] He draws attention to "its origin in medieval mysticism, its continuance in the mysticism of the baroque, its religious spiritualization in Klopsotck's Messiah …."[13]

The basis of the idea is the similarity, which—as the Bible already points out—connects the son of God, Jesus Christ, and man. This similarity is part of the human condition shared by every human being, a result of God's creation, and it is in itself only a potential, which can be fulfilled if the particular indi-

[10] According to Márkus, "the change of the whole conception of education" evolves "in oppisition to its medieval, scholastic pratice" (M á r k u s, "Kultúra, egy fogalom keletkezése és tartalma," 15f.).

[11] "The term *Bildung* was (earlier) used to denote the intellectual process, whereby man with the help of his own activity transforms his soul in the image of God. The religious meaning of the term was later secularised by the representatives of the German Enlightenment" (M á r k u s, "Kultúra, egy fogalom keletkezése és tartalma," 24).

[12] See Ilse S c h a a r s c h m i d t, *Der Bedeutungswandel der Worte «Bilden» und «Bildung»* (Berlin: Weidmann, 1931).

[13] G a d a m e r, *Truth and Method*, 9.

vidual is ready to act for it, otherwise it is not necessarily activated. Gadamer explicates the mystical tradition the following way: "The rise of the word *Bildung* evokes the ancient mystical tradition according to which man carries in his soul the image of God, after whom he is fashioned."[14] But he adds immediately that this similarity is not a given fact, but something that the individual needs to fight for: "man must cultivate in himself"[15] this similarity. Although he carries within himself the image of God, he needs to keep on fighting in order realise this image in himself—a process, which is called *formatio* in Latin. Gadamer equates this with the English form, formation, and their synonyms, which, he claims, are still present in Shaftesbury's writings, as the programme of the individual's self-formation.

The strength of the philosophical etymology Gadamer presents is the fact that it reveals the inner conflict, or more exactly, the paradox within the concept itself. The image of God is within us, but we have to be grateful for it to the Creator, who offered this character trait only to us, humans, as a gift. On the other hand, even if the source of this similarity is originally within us all, yet it is only a potential, which requires our own effort, through the process of self-formation, in order to get realised. The following extract of Gadamer's text refers to this dual nature of self-formation, connected to the *imago Dei* within us (here the philosopher reflects on the competition between the concepts of *formatio* and *Bildung*): "For in *Bildung* there is *Bild*. The idea of 'form' lacks the mysterious ambiguity of *Bild*, which comprehends both *Nachbild* (image, copy) and *Vorbild* (model)."[16] As we interpret it, the mysterious ambiguity of the *Bildungsideal* consists in the conceptual tension, in the fact that although humans are always already in the possession of the image of God within themselves, yet they need to strive to realise this likeness: image in that context is simultaneously a descriptive (*imago*) and a normative (*exemplum*) concept.

What is more, this normativity is not simply of a theoretical nature, it does not want to influence things simply in the world of ideas. It is an ideal that, to get really true, must be applied in practice. It was the French philosopher and historian of philosophy Pierre Hadot, who—almost in parallel with Gadamer—turned contemporary philosophy's attention to the historical fact that philosophy, as it was understood both in the ancient Greco-Roman world and at the peak of Christianity, was not a system of abstract ideas, a mere theoretical construction, but the conclusion of an existential choice, which had a direct impact on the everyday life of both the thinker and his audience. According to the philologically substantiated, revisionist thesis of Hadot, philosophy was

[14] Ibid., 10.
[15] Ibid.
[16] Ibid.

earlier seen as a way of life and a form of spiritual exercise.[17] It was a way of life in the sense that the student who wanted to get initiated into philosophy, had to study the offers of the more remarkable philosophical schools, and prove his maturity by engaging himself with one or the other schools. And engagement here was not a theoretical enterprise, but a very practical one: by this decision he chose a way of life, and not simply principles, had to follow a certain pattern of behaviour, and did not simply arrive at rational insights. Philosophy was taken as a spiritual exercise in the sense that the picking up of a philosophical way of life propagated by the chosen school required not simply intellectual effort, but also presupposed a kind of self-formation, which in many respects resembled the spiritual exercises expected from the believer in Christian religion. The student needed to give up his own obstinate will, the wishes that led him astray, and through a kind of meditative practice he had to identify himself with the way of life which fitted his nature, and this he could realise by self-moderation and self-control and through an exercise of the virtue of practical wisdom.

An important part of Hadot's interpretation of the philosopher's activity is that, in this classical tradition, philosophy borders on religion, presupposing existential risk-taking on the part of the agent. What is more, this tradition did not disappear with the fall of the ancient world, but it is continuous in the newly emerging framework of thinking within Christianity. As Hadot explains, Christian thinkers were successful in adjusting this tradition to conform with Christian religious teaching. As a result of this adjustment, a Christian philosophical idiom was born. This can be illustrated by Boethius's *Consolation*, or Saint Augustine's *Confessions*, and this adjustment also secured that the tradition of classical philosophical practice survived among the changing circumstances of medieval and early modern Europe, up at least to Montaigne's and Pascal's philosophy. An important building block of this tradition is the idea that thought cannot be separated from its thinker, its formation is closely connected to the way the thinker forms her own workdays, and on the whole, her own self. It does never cut itself away, however from the paragon which determined its creation, and which served as a clue to its realisation: the example provided by the life and teachings of Christ.

ENLIGHTENED IDEOLOGISTS AND CRITICS OF POLITENESS

From the perspective of the *Bildung* concept, the emergence of Christian humanism, as well as its aftermath, the partly secular and partly denomina-

[17] See Pierre H a d o t, *Philosophy as a Way of Life: Spiritual Exercises from Socrates to Foucault*, trans. M. Chase (Oxford: Blackwell, 1995).

tional Enlightenment, are much easier to make sense of. We can say—opposing the view of György Márkus—that its religious reference is not an unnecessary addendum to the concept, which can be stripped off in the right moment. We arrive at a much more reliable view of its real significance if we understand that it preserves its transcendental dimension also in its late, secularised version, as a remnant of this earlier phase of its history.

Let us see in what ways the concept of *Bildung* took its form in the period which gave birth to modernity; this period is unequivocally called early modern, even if it can be compartmentalized, when analysed by a more nuanced history of ideas.

Christian humanism was defined by its interest in the antique heritage, rediscovering the significance of the arts and rhetoric for both philosophy and for the humanities, as they were understood in modernity. Opposed to the self-lashing attitude of Augustinian Christianity that presents human beings as already corrupted by their guilt and as always in the need of suppressing their original nature, in Christian humanism the person appears as a creature always potentially perfectible, which is guaranteed by her being created in the image of God. How far she gets perfected largely depends on education and self-formation. The ideal of education already points beyond a small elite, and does not simply mean the institutionalised teaching programme of the medieval university. In this new ideal the aim is not simply the transmission of certain quantity and quality of knowledge data, but a training of the human being in all of her capacities—a kind of character formation. After all, it is not simply the objective knowledge made available by human reason that distinguishes man from other creatures, it is not simply her rationality that is reminiscent of her Creator, but her sentiments and sensibilities are just as important—as it is ascertained by the rhetorical literature of the age—because these are also resources of virtue, which might bring one nearer to her Creator, as soon as they are perfected. In this respect rhetoric has a significance—in opposition to scholastic philosophy, or even to the modern concept of science (both of them belonging to the realm of *logos*)—gained by its power to influence gentle sentiments and cool down violent passions (both of them belonging to the realm of *pathos*), and also by its role played in the formation of human character, or as we would say, the personality (*ethos*).

The Courtier,[18] Baldassare Castiglione's courtesy book originally published in 1528, played a major role in the era of Christian humanism in the conceptual history of *Bildung*. It is written in the transformed genre of the mirror for

[18] *The Book of the Courtier from the Italian Count Baldassare Castiglione done into English by Sir Thomas Hoby anno 1561*, With an Introduction by Walter Raleigh (London: David Nutt, 1900, available at https://archive.org/details/bookofcourtierfr00bald).

princes literature, advising in a dialogical, narrative form to gentlemen and gentle women who want to make their fortune in court how to behave properly. Although we could have picked out a number of similar examples, Castiglione's book is worth mentioning both for the simple fact that it had an extraordinary impact,[19] and because it tells us a lot about the social conditions of a newly emerging interest in humanist education. *The Courtier* is a book characteristic of the court life of Italian city-states in the midth of what came to be called the Renaissance. It was in this context that the social privileges one could gain earlier simply by birth, so characteristic of a feudal system, were replaced or at least partially supplemented by individual merits dependent on humanistic erudition, politeness and other artistic and social excellences, like being proficient in the fine arts, music, language and architecture, all of them participating in what came to be called *Bildung* much later. *The Courtier* became widely known as a handy summary of the norms of civility characteristic of the age, all over Europe, and an important milestone on the road towards the clearly conceptualised form of *Bildung*.

There is one more reason why Castiglione's work is relevant in our story: it awakened in its contemporary readers an awareness of the importance of the norm of self-formation or self-fashioning.[20] In other words, he could call their attention to a window of opportunity which they had not noticed earlier: that all of them could arrive at a level of self-knowledge, when they were able to transform their own spiritual structure, form their own character, and this inward work can help their positive external recognition. Recognising this can lead the reader to the conclusion that the individual's fate is not predetermined, but that they can play a significant role in it. Although external pressures are not negligible, they can be modified within certain limits. The inner world of the individual, her attitudes, sentiments, passions, wishes and wills are known—to a certain extent—only to her, and to that extent they can be deliberately changed only by her. Certainly, the psychological thinking of the day is not easily compared to the present state of the discipline: it mainly relied on the results of ancient philosophy, but Montaigne's monumental work is a proof that there were very important practical observations even on the terrain of self-knowledge in the early modern period, not independently from the tradition of Christian spiritual literature (including Augustine) and its offsprings (like the writings of St. John of the Cross or St. Teresa of Avila).[21]

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[19] For the reconstruction of the reception of the book, see Peter B u r k e, *The Fortunes of the* Courtier*: The European Reception of Castiglione's* Cortegiano (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1995).

[20] "Self-fashioning" is a concept introduced by a literary historian Stephen Greenblatt. See Stephen G r e e n b l a t t, *Renaissance Self-Fashioning: From More to Shakespeare* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984).

[21] For a good overview of the relevance of spiritual writings for literature, see Ákos C s e k e, "Jezsuita barokk?," in *Fejezetek a kora modern esztétikai gondolkodás történetéből* (1450–1650),

The literary genres of Christian spirituality usually ended up in the realm of latter day fiction. The literature of self-formation will be recycled in the age of Enlightenment.[22]

To take an example of this second period, Lord Anthony Ashley Cooper, the third Earl of Shaftesbury, is an obvious choice. He was privately tutored by John Locke, one of the greatest philosophers of the age. The student turned against his master, criticising the sort of epistemology-oriented philosophy practised by him in the footsteps of Descartes, and returning to a strong programme of neohumanism, as the basis of his own Enlightened project. This collision of intellectual discourse put a different light on the decisive debate of the period between what was called the ancients and the moderns. It illustrated well that a reinterpretation of the antique heritage can have a real social reforming potential in the eighteenth century. Shaftesbury thought about wisdom in a Socratic manner, but had an interest in other great forerunners, and was open to ideas stemming from rhetorical theory, the fine arts and literature, art forms which were just about to be identified in the emerging discourse of the age as belonging to a common concept of art. He regarded the love of wisdom (*philo-sophia*) as more than just a specific scientific discourse, defined by its strict research methodology. He discovered in it a way which could lead to self-knowledge, and through that to self-formation, as well.

However, Shaftesbury's programme did not simply aim at solving the individual's existential problems, as a technique of self-education. It had a further function: to gear up a moderate social transformation. One who has cultivated herself up to the point of having the ideally versatile spirit is no longer privileged in the sense attributed to the term in feudal society, but becomes able to join the ideal, spiritual aristocracy, as the term was understood by Aristotle. This is an elite that can rightfully rule society, as its members are best equipped for the mission intellectually, morally, and as far as their behaviour is concerned. To have a cultivated spirit does not simply mean to have knowledge of the world, or a fitting external manner of behaviour. Rather (or beside all these), it means to be in possession of certain spiritual virtues that characterised, both in the ancient Greco-Roman and in the Christian tradition, the statesman (or the stateswoman) who was able to make the right decisions in the right moment.

In other words, the Enlightenment takes over from Christian humanism its concept of virtue, based on (self-)cultivation, and perceives it as the condition

F.H. Hörcher, ed. (Budapest: L'Harmattan, 2013), 61–86.

[22] An important intermediary in this development is the Baroque period, which focuses on the insincerity of representation, on simulation and falsity. A Baroque master of self-formation, important in Gadamer's metanarrative, is Balthasar Gracián.

for social regeneration, updating with a republican model of a responsible and cultivated citizenry the earlier versions of bios towards the ideal new aristocracy (which replaces the estates representing their own interest, with an elected parliament, representing the whole population), or a philosopher-king (in other words, the enlightened absolute ruler). In this vision an important role is attributed to the idea of progress, development and reform. Social life is characterised here by some sort of teleological dynamics: it is not only the individual who can fulfil her own potential, but a similar aim motivates the political community, and sometimes even the state.

Social progress is an idea that emerges in a number of ways in the competing paradigms of national and cosmopolitan Enlightenments. The British model, for example, is based on the Scottish philosophy of history, generally called the four-stages theory. According to this model, European societies follow an ideal pattern, an order of development, which is marked out by preordained phases. The idea could be traced back to early modern natural law theory. It is present, for example, in Pufendorf's thought in the seventeenth century. It arrives at a full-blown form in the eighteenth-century French and Scottish theories.[23] One should take special note of the work of Anne Robert Jacques Turgot and Adam Smith's *Lectures on Justice, Police, Revenue and Arms*.[24] A whole book is dedicated to the issue by Adam Ferguson, his *Essay on the History of Civil Society*, first published in 1767.[25] They have a common message—not being simply descriptive histories, they have a normative dimension, as part of the authors' moral science. Human societies should get through the following steps of development: the hunting-gatherer, the pasturing, the agricultural and the commercial forms of society. The progress made to get from one phase to the other is not simply of a technological nature. According to their commonly accepted hypothesis, the new phase always represents a higher degree in the refinement of moral manners and politeness of behaviour. Certainly, Britain represents the highest level of sophistication, as far as the polite and civil manners of its commercial society are concerned. The

[23] See István H o n t, "The Language of Sociability and Commerce: Samuel Pufendorf and the Theoretical Foundations of the 'Four-Stages Theory'," in *The Languages of Political Theory in Early-Modern Europe*, ed. A. Pagden (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 253–76.

[24] See Adam S m i t h, *Lectures on Justice, Police, Revenue and Arms* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1896), (available at http://archive.org/stream/lecturesonjustic00smituoft#page/n7/mode/2up). It is worth mentioning, however, that Smith himself diverted from the paradigm case, when he argued for a reversed order in the modern European history of the development of commerce.

[25] See A. F e r g u s o n, *An Esssay on the History of Civil Society* (London: T. Cadell, 1782) (available at http://oll.libertyfund.org/titles/1428). For a detailed account of the Scottish Enlightenment's conjectural history, see: Ferenc H. H ö r c h e r, "A mérséklet filozófiája a skót felvilágosodásban," in: *A skót felvilágosodás. Morálfilozófiai szöveggyűjtemény*, ed. F.H. Hörcher (Budapest: Osiris, 1996), 295–396.

cause of this progress is that as soon as direct danger is over, the sciences and the arts begin to flourish, letting human agents's activities bring their fruits, and each and every member of society can enjoy them freely, as the government is able to guarantee the individual's property and personal safety: "Like the ancient republics, immediately after some alarming sedition, or like the kingdom of Great Britain, at the close of its civil wars, they retain the spirit of activity, which was recently awakened, and are equally vigorous in every pursuit, whether of policy, learning, or arts."[26] Ferguson, who was a native of the Scottish Highlands, and served as a military chaplain taking part in some serious combats on the Continent, found it important to stress that civil virtues should not overshadow military virtues or they risk an opposite error: "But if nations pursue the plan of enlargement and pacification, till their members can no longer apprehend the common ties of society, nor be engaged by affection in the cause of their country, they must err on the opposite side, and by leaving too little to agitate the spirits of men, bring on ages of languor, if not of decay."[27] As he sees it, a smooth operation of society requires that besides caring for their own individual liberty, individuals should be ready to take sacrifices in the service of the liberty of the community. No society can work if "(i)n the minds of the people, the sense of a public was defaced."[28]

The conflict between the ideal of a cultivated mind and a sense of community is not only Ferguson's theme. The example of the decline of the highly civilised Roman empire keeps haunting the imagination of Enlightened authors, immersed in the culture of ancient Rome. They reflected in a number of ways on the failure of the corrupted Roman elite, directed by individual and factional interest, to take care of the common interest, of what Ferguson already labelled as "national spirit." The narrative was first based on Montesquieu and his *Considérations sur les causes de la grandeur des Romains et de leur décadence*,[29] and later on Edward Gibbon, who—in his *History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*[30]—meditated on the Roman decline in a narrative which resembled that of the French thinker, but which was much more substantial and detailed. The two of them shared the popular view that empires, just as individuals, have life cycles, and therefore rising, flourishing

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[26] F e r g u s o n, *An Essay on the History of Civil Society*, Part Fifth, Section II: "Of the Temporary Efforts and Relaxations of the National Spirit," 355.

[27] Ibid., Section III: "Of Relaxations in the National Spirit incident to Polished Nations," 367.

[28] Ibid., 372.

[29] See Charles-Louis d e S e c o n d a t M o n t e s q u i e u, *Considérations sur les causes de la grandeur des Romains et de leur décadence* (Paris: Libraire Ch. Poussielgue, 1907, available at http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k5455291d/f7.image).

[30] See Edward G i b b o n, *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, vol. 1–6 (London: Strahan & Cadell, 1776–98).

and declining are important phases of the life of these political phenomena. Gibbon cherished the views that were to some extent "conservative" and, like Burke, he warned his readers against excess both in politics and in religion. In his view, in these fields enthusiasm may have disastrous effects. His *magnum opus* obstinately asks the question of what might have let the huge Roman empire fall. His minutely detailed analyses show that civilisations which are beyond their zenith are unable to defend themselves against the cruelty of the uncivilised, barbaric invaders. Relying on a distinction made by Aristotle, Gibbon himself distinguishes between two types of barbarians, i.e., non-Roman people: one is barbaric, because—although once they were cultivated—it has lost its freedom by now, forced to live under the despotism of a powerful autocrat; the other type is rather free, but the political community is unorganised, and their behaviour not humane: these are the savages of the nomadic nations.[31] Gibbon's analysis led his readers to regard certain contemporary phenomena as savage, including the revolutionary passion of the democratic spirit, which resulted in the outbreak of the French Revolution just one year after the publication of the last volumes of his magisterial *Decline and Fall*. With this influential warning Gibbon gave voice to one of the most significant teachings of the late Enlightenment, cautioning the readers against the dangers of a culture which is beyond its heyday.

Another internal critic of the Enlightenment was Jean-Jacques Rousseau, who also emphasized—in harmony with the civic traditions of his native city-state, Geneva—a sense of the public, opposing it with the individual interest-hunting, delight-seeking, art-for-art's sake way of thinking, favoured in Enlightened Parisian saloons where he was sometimes fooled. In his view, the historical phase characterised by the fully grown arts and sciences, characteristic of commercial societies, is antagonistic to moral manners, and cannot be negotiated with a sort of civil society that would meet the expectations of ancient (and Christian) philosophical wisdom: "... [O]ur souls have become corrupted to the extent that our sciences and our arts have advanced towards perfection ... We have seen virtue fly away to the extent that their lights have risen over our horizon."[32] Rousseau confronts the corruption of his supposed-

[31] "Using the image of the Athenian polis to organize such a scale, Aristotle differentiated 'barbarians' into the city and river dwellers of the east, who were civilized but lived under despotisms which made them servile, and the forest and plain dwellers of the north, who were free but wild, ferocious, and what was later called 'savage.' This differentiation of barbarians into servile and savage has lasted ever since…" (J.G.A. P o c o c k, "Edward Gibbon in History: Aspects of the Text in *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*," in *The Tanner Lectures on Human Values*, vol. 11, ed. G.B. Peterson (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1988), 317, available at http://tannerlectures.utah.edu/_documents/a-to-z/p/pocock90.pdf).

[32] Jean-Jacques R o u s s e a u, *Discourse on the Arts and Sciences*, trans. I. Johnston, (Adelaide: The University of Adelaide, eBooks@Adelaide, 2014, available at https://ebooks.adelaide.edu.au/r/rousseau/jean_jacques/arts/).

ly overstrung, declining civilisation (to take his point, think about the two notorieties of the late Enlightenment, both of them paradigmatic in their own way: Casanova and the Marquis de Sade) with his naïve admiration for the innocence of the noble savage, with all his condemnations of the arts and sciences of the moderns as collected in the *Encyclopédie* of his one-time friends, Diderot and D'Alembert, taking as his standard poetry's first, pure and sincere golden age as presented in his theory of the conjectural history of language. Being himself not only a *philosophe*, but also a talented novel (perhaps a less talented opera) writer, Rousseau in his own widely read novels propagated that very same pure innocence, and in his educational novel or *Bildungsroman*,[33] *Émile, or on Education* (1762) emphatically demands that family- or state-supported education should not corrupt the moral conditions of the nature with which man is originally born.

With the strong and passionate voice of Rousseau's oeuvre not only an enlightened critique of the Enlightenment was articulated, but also a criticism of the humanistic *Bildungsideal* itself. The self-educated philosopher convincingly illustrates the sort of (moral and social) risks involved in an exaggerated significance attributed to philosophy exemplified by the plethora of his one-time philosopher-friends. Reframing Pascal's criticism of Descartes, and Shaftesbury's one of Hobbes, Rousseau rationally condemns the exaggerated cult of reason, so characteristic of the French type of the Enlightenment.[34] He expresses a philosophically argued preference for the poetics of emotions which, as he claims, is a more reliable guide for the socially active agent as rational arguments. The most important message of his work is the questioning of the primary meaning and significance of the category of *Bildung*: he doubts that culture, politeness and civility necessarily lead the moderns to a moral high ground, or even that they are virtues in the traditional (ancient Greek and Christian) sense.

Certainly, we could only provide here a rather hasty and therefore oversimplified reconstruction of the history of some enlightened approaches to politeness. It did not relate, for example, to any representatives of the German chapter—although Goethe's *Bildungsroman* is undoubtedly the paradigmatic defence of *Bildungsideal*[35]. No reconstruction of the discourse of Bildung

[33] See Manfred E n g e l, *Variants of the Romantic "Bildungsroman" (with a Short Note on the "Artist Novel")*, in *A Comparative History of Literatures in European Languages*, vol. 23, *Romantic Prose Fiction*, G. Gillespie, M. Engel and B. Dieterle, ed. (Amsterdam–Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 2014), 263–95. Engel distinguishes *Bildungsroman* from the novel of education (*Erziehungsroman*), a subgenre of the novel of development (*Entwicklungsroman*).

[34] See Friedrich August v o n H a y e k, *The Counterrevolution of Science. Studies on the Abuse of Reason* (Indianapolis: Liberty Press, 1979).

[35] See Giovanna S u m m e r f i e l d, Lisa D o w n w a r d, *New Perspectives on the European Bildungsroman* (London: Continuum, 2010). This new monograph of *Bildungsroman* also starts the description of the genre with a discussion of Goethe's *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre*.

should disregard the influential practice of the German popular philosophers.[36] The present account of the story was simply meant to show that the Enlightenment closely relied upon the ancient-and-Christian humanistic *Bildungsideal*, both in an affirmative and a critical tone. The final section of the paper recalls a systematic defence of the programme of *Bildung*, by way of reconstructing two contradictory moments of the rather extraordinary mindset of the German classical liberal thinker, Wilhelm von Humboldt. This short account of the term, in Humboldt's key, will prepare the ground for a condensed overall assessment of the everlasting significance of the concept of *Bildung*.

HUMBOLDT'S TWO CONCEPTS OF *BILDUNG*

What the classical (mostly nieneteenth-century) German liberals thought about the nature and function of *Bildung* is comfortably summarised by Humboldt's educational ideas.[37] Through the shift of emphasis within the ouevre, we can get a glimpse of the inner tension of the characteristically liberal ideology of *Bildung*.

Wilhelm Humboldt started his career as a cosmopolitan, a Franco-German enlightened author, who talks about *Bildung* as a programme to fulfil one's self, in harmony with his political philosophy that connects the concept of the minimal state with the idea of individual liberty. Yet, in his second creative period he puts a Ferguson-like sense of the public at the top of his value-priorities, this way criticising his own earlier views of the concept.

In the chapter on Humboldt, the monographer of German historical thought introduces him the following way: "An aristocrat, cosmopolitan in outlook, a friend of Goethe and especially of Schiller with whom he exchanged over a thousand letters, Humboldt on the eve of the invasion of Germany by revolutionary France shared fully in the *Humanitätsideal*."[38] The citizens of the enlightened Republic of Letters, a handful of his contemporaries, might have been used to making sense of Humboldt's purpose. For example, we should remember that even Hegel was recycling Scottish social philosophy, when he was to make a clear philosophical distinction between the state and the civil society.[39] Hegel's

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[36] For an assessment of eighteenth-century German popular philosophy and its relationship to Scottish thinkers, see: Ferenc H ö r c h e r, "Sensus Communis in Gellert, Garva and Feder: An Anglo-Scottish Element in German Popular Philosophy", in Ferenc Hörcher, *Prudentia Iuris: Towards a Pragmatic Theory of Natural Law*, (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 2000), 137–57.

[37] In the following interpretation of Humboldt I will rely heavily on the cited work by Georg G. Iggers.

[38] I g g e r s, *The German Conception of History*, 44.

[39] See Norbert W a s z e k, *The Scottish Enlightenment and Hegel's Account of "Civil Society,"* (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1988).

conceptual distinction plays a key role in Humboldt's argument, as it helped to give support to his central (classical) liberal assumption: an unwavering respect for (romantic) individuality. This is the core of his thought, which connects Humboldt to the romantics, too, and through which he reached the ancient focus on self-knowledge, as presented in the Delphic gnome, "know thyself."

In the German cultural context romanticism was also a way to pay tribute to the Greeks. The Delphic warning of taking care of one's own character was interpreted by the German classical authors as the romantic aggrandisement of the self. Humbolt—among others—destilled his own concept of individuality from those two types of spiritual spring. His theory, therefore, is not yet a fully-fledged romantic aggrandisement of the individual, as exemplified for example in John Stuart Mill's later *Autobiography*[40] (1873). And his concept of the individual does not focus so much on the irrational overflow of human passions, as is manifested in the concept of the artist as genius in Romantic theories of music (think about the figure of Beethoven or Chopin, or later, Wagner) or of literature (think about, above all, Byron). The young Humboldt's world is still a cosmos of Goethe-like enlightened rationality: "man's highest purpose—the one prescribed by eternal immutable reason, not by changing inclinations—(was) the highest and most proportioned development of his resources into one whole."[41] And yet—as the son of the age of sensibility and an admirer of mitigated sentimentalism—he is a careful observer of the importance of soft passions in the individual's character-formation: a harmonious cooperation of human powers include the cultivation of the faculties of sentiments. Instead of suppressing them, as in Stoicism or ascetic Christianity, he suggests to learn how to pacify human passions in order to let the sentiments work in accordance with the best (short- and long-term) rational interests of the individual.

It is also remarkable that in Humboldt's social vision we do not get the sheer interest-driven competition of isolated individuals, aiming at self-realisation, present in mainstream atomistic classical liberal individualism, derived from earlier natural law theory, with which Iggers contrasts Humboldt's way of thinking. In accordance with the Enlightened sociability, Humboldt writes about society as something natural, assuming that "there was a basic harmony among individualities in growth, and did not see in society as such, as distinct from the state, a significant source of constraint."[42] His vision, in this respect, was much more Aristotelian than Hobbesian, relying on the Greek philoso-

[40] See John Stuart M i l l, *Autobiography* (Adelaide: The University of Adelaide, eBooks@Adelaide, 2014, available at https://ebooks.adelaide.edu.au/m/mill/john_stuart/m645a/).

[41] Wilhelm v o n H u m b o l d t, *Ideen zu einem Versuch, die Grenzen der Wirksamkeit des Staats zu bestimmen*, in Wilhelm von Humboldt, *Gesammelte Schriften*, vol. 1 (Berlin: B. Behr's Verlag, 1903), 106. Cf. I g g e r s, *The German Conception of History*, 46.

[42] I g g e r s, *The German Conception of History*, 46.

phers' notion of naturally given and socially cultivated friendship (think about such British novel writers as Jane Austen).

Obviously, Humboldt's notion of sociability in his first period is apolitical: cooperation takes place within the framework of what Hegel calls civil society, and not within the state—this latter has only one institutional function: to secure external and internal safety. The state can only provide security for human cooperation, all the other conditions need to be safeguarded by the internal, psychic powers of the individuals and their interplay. Individuals can bring forward their potentials only by relying on their own internal resources: the highest ideal, in Humboldt's view, would come true when "every being develops only out of himself and for his own sake."[43] In his first period, Humboldt admittedly preferred that aspect of the *Bildungsideal* which aimed at individual fulfilment through a domestication of the passions, but already this form of his theory is a diverging variant of German classical liberalism's individualistic ideology.

In his individualistic period, Humboldt had good reasons to keep cautious distance from the state: after all, the enlightened absolutism of the Prussian state did not primarily serve as a means to individual fulfilment. And yet it is not surprising that the author saw things in a different light, as soon as he looked at it not in opposition to the state, but in the service of it. When he took on himself the responsibility of a public administrator, his views changed rapidly and radically. As we saw in the case of Ferguson, the public discussions of the age of Enlightenment were joined by a markedly critical voice, which warned against the dangers of an individually oriented social regime, and after the excesses of the French Revolution and the violent imperial conquests initiated and led by Napoleon, this thought became popular, in particular in Germany, where national pride was hurt by the French. It is in this context that one should interpret Humboldt's new thesis, according to which Germans have a chance to minimise military threat only if the individual members of the state are prepared to take sacrifices in order to defend the common good. As he saw it, in his own days his homeland required all possible means to "inspire the citizen with the spirit of true war."[44] This way he drifts away from his earlier exclusive attention to the—mostly spiritual-intellecutal—needs of the individual towards a theoretical direction where public safety enjoys priority. In this context, too, *Bildung* preserves its importance, as it can serve the public

[43] H u m b o l d t, *Ideen zu einem Versuch, die Grenzen der Wirksamkeit des Staats zu bestimmen*, 106. Cf. I g g e r s, *The German Conception of History*, 46.

[44] H u m b o l d t, *Ideen zu einem Versuch, die Grenzen der Wirksamkeit des Staats zu bestimmen*, 137. Cf. I g g e r s, *The German Conception of History*, 47.

aim of ensuring that the citizens be attuned to each other, enabling them to defend the homeland together, when that is required.

There is yet another dimension to the concept of *Bildung* that plays a crucial part in Humboldt's ideas. He takes notice of the fact that it can refer both to external reality and to the inner realm of the individual, too. Interestingly this internal-external bipolarity is not disjoined from the other, above mentioned duality: that it can be seen either as individual- or as community-centred. In his fragment entitled *Theory of human Bildung*[45] (1793—4), the interpersonal relationship takes priority over one's own self, and with it, a stress on the long term effects of one's action become more relevant: "the human being … with no purpose directed at one particular thing, wants to strengthen and intensify the powers of his nature, and to furnish his own being with value and permanence."[46] While *Bildung* is still about self-formation, its success is not independent of long term public recognition.

Making use of the Aristotelian conceptual distinction between matter and form, Humboldt joins the main tenor of classical German philosophy, when he writes that the power operating in man, his reasoning capacity is "pure form," which "needs matter, to express itself in it, and thus to survive."[47] In order to find raw material through which it can express itself, reasoning turns towards the external world, to gather knowledge and pursue activity. This is the explanation why for the individual the important thing is not what he acquires from the world, but what reactions he receives by his own activity, which reconstructs the individual's inner temple. It is "his own internal improvement, ennobling, or at least the pacification of his own turmoil, which tortures him."[48] By learning more about the world, in fact, he understands only himself better. Through his activity in the external world he wants to make only his inner self free and independent.

One should, of course, recognise that behind these ideas lies the Kantian teaching of the human being knowing herself, and this way showing both to herself and the world her dignity and analogy to God, in a more elaborate form. This is revealed in the detail of his teaching that the individual becomes a part of the wholeness of humanity by the cognition of her own particularity. The human race is characterised by the values that the individual targets through this reflected way: cultivation (*Bildung*), wisdom (*Weisheit*) and virtue (*Tugend*).

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[45] See Wilhelm v o n H u m b o l d t, "Theorie der Bildung des Menschen," in *Allgemeine Bildung. Analysen zu ihrer Wirklichkeit, Versuche über ihre Zukunft*, ed. H.E. Tenroth (Weinheim–München: Juventa Verlag, 1986), 32–8 (available at http://www2.ibw.uni-heidelberg.de/~aeschule/HumboldtTB.pdf).

[46] Ibid., 33.

[47] Ibid.

[48] Ibid.

With this idea of Humboldt we arrive back to the ancient Greco-Roman and Christian-Catholic great tradition with which we started this overview, tracing back the narrative through Cicero to Aristotle. This latter had a crucial impact already on medieval Christianity, partly because of his ethics, which presents virtue as a necessary ingredient of a successful individual life. In Aristotle's practical philosophy a fruitful life is in close connection with philosophy, or rather more, with wisdom (*sophia*). This connection between a fully consumed human life and wisdom was announced by Aristotle along the teachings of his masters, Socrates and Plato, and leached by the doctrine of *ataraxia* in the dark views of the sombre Stoics. The connection is strengthened by Christianity, when it explains the overlap between wisdom and self-formation with an existential struggle in man's this-worldly life, burdened by original sin and predestination, but redeemed by the teaching of an everlasting afterlife. And it is again reaffirmed in the humanistic teachings of the early modern period.

In Humboldt's understanding of this long European tradition, when the individual turns towards the external world, she makes an effort to record the values configured within the make-up of her own micro-cosmos. Through the creative act she wants to get beyond her own transitory nature. The birth of her work of art brings her "the soothing thoughts of a certain continuity of ennobling and *Bildung*".[49] The active personality strives to transmit (as a kind of heritage) the values that she herself nurtured in her own self to others—culture as a social phenomenon is in this sense a spiritual victory over physical decline, materialised in a physical form.

This is the point where we can recognise the importance attributed to art by Humboldt in his theory of *Bildung*. The individual tries to present the spiritual fruits of his own inner realm, so as "not to lose himself in the process of alienation."[50] The artist's creative act serves to immortalise those fruits. In order to achieve this, the artist "needs to reach the mass of objects, to bring this material to the figure of his spirit, and to make the two comparable."[51] He can sustain himself in the infinite world, if he sets limits to his own activity, "not to get lost in an empty and barren way in infinity."[52] Through this self-imposed restrictions he can keep his final aim of overcoming mortality, that is, why "he tries to keep his diverse knowledge and handling of affairs constricted, to turn his pure stock of learning into cultured knowledge and his restless aspiration into wise activity."[53]

[49] Ibid., 35.
[50] Ibid.
[51] Ibid.
[52] Ibid., 36.
[53] Ibid.

BILDUNG AND SOCIABILITY FROM A WESTERN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

In Humboldt's conception of *Bildung*, cultivation does not mean factual knowledge, and neither is it an endeavour directly aimed at processing the external world. Man is moved by an inner puzzlement towards a fulfilment of his natural potentials. The aim of self-formation is a perfected form of the self, and *Bildung* is a perfected state of the human character, which achieves flourishing through virtue and practical wisdom, enabling humans to cooperate and live together peacefully.

The paradox is that, in spite of a motivation for self-cultivation, there is no way for the individual to work directly on herself: her spirit needs raw material (matter, in Aristotelian terms) to work on, in other words external objects, in order to project on them her inner values. Arts and science are activities and practical knowledge through which humans cultivate or process the external world, and these impulses have a reflex effect upon the individual, serving her indirectly to overcome her particularity and physical decay, which is surely one of the long-term aims of a creative mind. Culture helps humans to bring their selves to fruition, with an inbuilt detour towards the external world. It offers humans—not only artists, but also art lovers—a hope to bring forth their humanity; or, as both Pascal and Kant would agree, to recognise the dignity (through human reason) of their transitory being: by the reconstruction of the self in a never-ending interaction of learning the world and processing its reactions.

By linking in one narrative the few moments of the intellectual history of sociability, as it is achieved through the concept of *Bildung* reconstructed above, the aim of this paper was to direct attention to the fact that there is a continuous line of practice in our Greco-Roman-Christian-Enlightened world, which is almost unbroken, or which lives underground even in times of political cataclysms. This line of practice aims at a sort of self-knowledge that is not selfish, a sort of practical wisdom that is not Machiavellian, a sort of culture that is not cut away from the daily life of the community. On the contrary: through promoting *Bildung*, a community can initiate its youth, it was argued here, into the traditional knowledge which serves as the safeguard of the community's survival. Without *Bildung*, even the most acceptable political regime, democracy, can also turn into a nightmare. After all, for its smooth operation it requires from those who exercise power a sort of moderation that is hard to be expected from any ruler who has never cultivated her mind nor moderated her passions, disciplining her will. Without political culture democracy is merely majoritarian rule and a set of abstract norms that nobody follows. And political culture is only attainable through self-discipline and a socially open-minded cultivation of one's mind and heart.