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Solidarity Unbound

- Rethinking Suffering and Solidity in Late Modernity

Master's Thesis

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Table of Contents

Abstract

While solidarity is one of the most important concepts in the modern political vocabulary, relatively little has been written on it. In this thesis, I examine the concept of solidarity in detail. I argue that solidarity is best understood as a kind of solidity that can alleviate suffering. To defend this definition, I provide a rational reconstruction of why the concept emerged during the transition to modernity. I show how the concept responds to the kinds of suffering that arise from individualization such as anomie, alienation, and pauperism. To substantiate this argument I show how two of the most important social theorists in modernity, Karl Marx and Emile Durkheim, both identified forms of *suffering* stemming from individualization and proposed forms of *solidity* which could alleviate this suffering. However, while solidarity is meant to alleviate suffering it can also become a source of it. This is what I call "the paradox of solidarity." After having provided a rational reconstruction of the concept, I go on to examine this paradox in detail. To better understand the paradox, I examine the mechanisms that drive people to externalize their suffering towards others. I draw on insights from Friedrich Nietzsche and William Connolly to develop the idea of an economy of suffering. I argue that solidarity building participates in this economy by distributing, circulating, and producing suffering. I show how this creates dynamic effects where the distribution of suffering affects the total amount of suffering.

I then examine how we can best approach solidarity in the face of its paradoxical nature. I do so by drawing on the work of Richard Rorty and Hans-Georg Gadamer. By putting the two in conversation with each other, I try to draw out the strengths and weaknesses of both to develop a strategy for how to best deal with the paradox. I defend a double-ended strategy which works on both ends of the paradox at the same time: we should both open ourselves to the suffering of outsiders *and* adjust our notions of solidity to make them as inclusive as possible and to reduce the extent to which they cause others to suffer. I conclude by considering how this strategy can be applied to the problems of solidarity facing us today. I show how the paradox of solidarity was renegotiated during the 20th century as Leftist political movements came to power, and examine the paradoxes of individualization, neoliberalism, globalization, and nationalism that make up the political terrain of late modernity. Finally, I discuss how nationalists and humanists might engage in a dialogue with each other to become more aware of each other's strengths and weaknesses and adjust their conceptions of solidarity accordingly. The hope is that both will rework their notions of solidity to become more attentive to the suffering of others without thereby undermining solidarity altogether.

Introduction:

Why Solidarity?

> "Solidarity (…) is an indispensable imperative in
> our democratic times, and at the same time, it is
> a calling which we cannot answer unconditionally.
> This is the tragedy of our current position."
>
> - Charles Taylor (2007: 77).

One of the most important political issues in Europe today is the conflict between particularistic forms of solidarity such as nationalism and universal solidarity with all human beings: should European countries extend solidarity to refugees from Africa and the Middle East or rather shut their doors in order to preserve the solidarity within the respective national communities? In the absence of answers, conflict turns into crisis: as the number of refugees on the bottom of Mediterranean Sea continuously increase,[1] so do the fences and border controls awaiting those who make it across alive.[2] The so-called "refugee crisis"[3] is in fact a crisis of solidarity pertaining both to the (lack of) solidarity with Middle Eastern and North African refugees and to the (lack of) solidarity within the EU not to mention the (lack of) solidarity in the Middle Eastern and North African countries from which the refugees flee. The crisis runs deeper than the daily tragedies we are currently witnessing in the Mediterranean. The problem is not just that empirical reality is proving increasingly hostile to the ideal of solidarity, but also that the concept of solidarity itself is conflict-ridden. This can be seen in the way contemporary solidarity discourse is dominated by the question of blame: nationalists blame the crisis on humanists and their insistence on open borders which threatens to undermine the solidarity of the national

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[1] According to The International Organization for Migration, in 2015 alone more than 3.700 people died trying to cross the Mediterranean (IOM 2016).

[2] European countries such as Austria, Hungary, and Macedonia all erected barbed wire fences, while others such as Germany, Denmark, and Sweden introduced extraordinary border controls (BBC 2016; Cooke 2016; Graham-Harrison 2015).

[3] This term has been used very widely. For example, President of the European Commission Jean-Claude Juncker invoked it during his 2015 State of the Union aptly titled "Time for Honesty, Unity and Solidarity" (Juncker 2015).

community.[4] For humanists it is the other way around: the fault lies with the nationalists and their exclusionary vision of solidarity which prevents solidarity with refugees in need.[5]

This fact prompts us to take a step back and consider whether there is something in the very conceptual structure of solidarity which allows for and perhaps even propels this disagreement. While solidarity is one of the most important words in the modern political vocabulary, relatively little has been written on the concept (Sangiovanni 2015: 340; Scholz 2008: 19). As the Latin roots of "concept" suggest, to conceptualize something means to attain a grasp of it. If there is indeed something in the conceptual architecture of solidarity which impels disagreement, we need a better grasp of the concept in order to adequately deal with the crisis of solidarity. The aim of this thesis is to provide just that.

In the thesis I focus on the inclusionary and exclusionary aspects of solidarity. In doing so, I bracket the question of which causes warrant our solidarity. This question is clearly an important one for anyone interested in solidarity but if we focus too narrowly on it, we risk blinding ourselves to the ways in which solidarity itself might become a source of suffering. To get a better grasp of what fuels the conflicts of solidarity, I focus my attention on the dynamics of solidarity-building. As a result, I do not defend any particular conception of solidarity. This does not mean that I am neutral with regards to solidarity. My argument has a clear universalist commitment in that I hold that we should aim for as holistic a view of suffering as possible. This means that we must recognize and respond to suffering in the most inclusive possible. However, I also subscribe to a form of pluralism in that I hold that this ideal regarding the *concept* of solidarity may inflect different *conceptions* of solidarity in different ways.[6]

My argument consists of a number of interrelated claims: first, solidarity is best understood as a kind of solidity which can alleviate suffering. Second, solidity may not only alleviate suffering but also cause it

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[4] The most extreme example of this may be Anders Behring Breivik's terror attack on 22 July 2011. While Breivik's attacks were motivated by radical anti-immigration sentiments, they did not target immigrants. Instead, Breivik targeted the political youth organization The Workers' Youth League (AUF) (associated with the Norwegian Workers Party (DNA)) during their yearly summer camp on the island of Utøya. Breivik justified his choice of victims by claiming that these left-wing humanists, referred to by Breivik as "cultural Marxists/multiculturalists," were "traitors" responsible for the influx of immigrants (BBC 2011). There are of course many examples of this which are much milder.

[5] As an example of this, we may think of the acts of civil disobedience committed by a number of Danes in the beginning of September 2015 as groups of immigrants attempted to pass through Denmark to seek asylum in Sweden without being caught by the Danish police (for an example, see Jørgensen 2015). These acts of civil disobedience may be seen as protests against the nationalist policies of the Danish government. I return to this conflict between nationalists and humanists in the final chapter.

[6] For the distinction between concept and conception, see Rawls 1971: 5.

and hence solidarity may be paradoxical. Third, this paradoxical aspect of solidarity must be taken into account when thinking about how to build solidarity. We must work from within the paradox to reduce its excesses by adjusting our conceptions of solidity and become more attentive to the suffering of outsiders all the while being cautious that solidity is not undermined in the process. Fourth, this does not imply that everyone must adopt the same (universalist) conception of solidarity. Rather, the strategy I propose may inflect different conceptions of solidarity in different ways. Common to all, however, is that they must seek a better understanding of the suffering of those outside the bounds of their notion of solidity. Fifth, in today's globalizing world, this implies that nationalists and humanists must open themselves to each other to reflect the good and the bad in each other.

In the remainder of this introduction I briefly present the paradox of solidarity and discuss it in relation to the existing literature on solidarity. I show how the existing literature's failure to reflect on the paradoxical nature of solidarity produces serious problems for those committed to the value of solidarity. I conclude by providing a chapter outline for the rest of the thesis.

0.1 What is the paradox of solidarity?

I claim that solidarity describes a relationship between *solidity* and *suffering*. Solidity be described variously as social cohesiveness, social glue, togetherness, unity, community, and so on. All of these descriptors have in common that they denote how individuals are bound together. The concept of solidarity is based on the idea that solidity can be a way to alleviate the kind of suffering associated with a life in solitude. Such suffering may take many forms: alienation, anomie, loneliness, meaninglessness, poverty, hunger, disease, and so on.

It is doubtful that human beings ever lived without some level of care for each other, but it is certain that such a life would be a miserable existence. Because human beings are social animals, for most people a solitary life is both lonely and void of meaning. Solidarity make people go beyond their own narrow self-interests to show concern for the well-being of others. However, solidarity is not only good because of what it is but also because of what it does: solidarity turns individual problems into collective ones and thus makes them easier to solve. Visions of justice require collective action if they are not to remain just that: visions.

The fact that solidarity is both a means and an end is evident from a quick glance at movements for social justice, such as the Civil Rights Movement in the 1960s or the global movement against global warming today. Such movements are united in their common struggle against social injustice. But what motivates them is not solely the goal of a just society, but also the community and comradery they find

in the movement itself. Kurt Bayertz captures this dual importance of solidarity when he remarks that, "[the concept of solidarity] refers directly to a *means* of the battle: solidarity as a weapon. Yet at the same time it refers to and *end* of the battle: solidarity as an anticipation of future society, as part of Utopia already lived" (Bayertz 1999: 20). As a weapon, solidarity can be used to mobilize against forces of injustice. But if solidarity is "a weapon" does it then imply violence, destruction, and potentially death? And if this is the case does this not contradict the idea that solidarity means concern for the well-being of others? If the concept of solidarity harbours internal contradiction this is more than anything else a reflection of the nature of politics: the political world we inhabit is a contradictory one, where the well-being of some often implies the (symbolic if not physical) destruction of others. Until we reach that utopia – "the end of the battle" - we are not merely fighting against *something* but also against *someone*. In practical terms, to fight against *oppression* most often means to fight against concrete *oppressors*. In politics, the rule of thumb is that there is no *adversity* without *adversaries*. Therefore, the creation of solidarity often results in its opposite; the care for others turns in to destruction of others. In these situations more solidarity means less solidarity. This is the paradox of solidarity: while solidity can alleviate suffering it can also be the cause of it. The paradox has important consequences for the way we approach solidarity, because our attempts to reduce suffering may actually end up increasing it.

0.2 Why we need to examine the paradox

While the concept of solidarity was long in the shadow of other prominent concepts of modern political discourse such as freedom, equality, and justice, it has recently received increasing attention from political theorists.[7] However, the concept still remains underexplored. Even though the surge in interest in solidarity has yielded novel approaches to the concept, the paradoxical nature of the concept has rarely been noticed.[8] By failing to reflect on the paradox, existing approaches to solidarity risk augmenting rather than alleviating suffering. In what follows, I try to elucidate the problems associated with ignoring the paradox by discussing one of the most prominent recent treatments of the concept, that of Hauke Brunkhorst. I focus on Brunkhorst not only because his theory is one of the most widely read, but also because I find it to be the richest and most sophisticated theory currently on offer.

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[7] Recent literature on the concept of solidarity includes but is not limited to: Bayertz 1999; Brunkhorst 2005; Gould 2007; Laitinen & Pessi 2015; Lukes 1999; Marso 2014; Preuss 1999; Sangiovanni 2015; Scholz 2008; Schwartz 2007; Shelby 2005; Walhof 2006; Warnke 2012; Wilde 2004, 2013; Wildt 1999.

[8] A notable exception in this regard is Lawrence Wilde who mentions the paradox of solidarity in his discussion of global solidarity (Wilde 2013). However, Wilde does not examine the paradox and its causes in detail.

In his aptly titled book *Solidarity*, Hauke Brunkhorst takes us on a fascinating conceptual journey from the Ancient idea of civic friendship, via the Christian idea of love of one's neighbour ("caritas"), through the French Revolution, to the meaning of solidarity in today's era of globalization (Brunkhorst 2005). The argument is too rich for me to do justice to all of its parts here. I will therefore limit myself to the normative ideal of solidarity that Brunkhorst puts forward and try to show how it may unwittingly serve to perpetuate the problems of the paradox of solidarity by failing to reflect on it.

Brunkhorst's main claim is that the modern concept of solidarity coincides with democracy. As he puts it, "solidarity (…) is nothing but the democratic realization of individual freedom" (Brunkhorst 2005: 3). Brunkhorst traces this meaning to the constitutional revolutions of the 18th century (Brunkhorst 2005: 56). Brunkhorst argues that solidarity is linked to the modern ideal of universal democratic self-rule which in the past has been best realized in the modern constitutional welfare state. Today, however, we need to go beyond the confines of the nation-state to create a global form of democratic solidarity based on human rights and international law through a "democratization of the transnational legal order" (Brunkhorst 2005: 175).

While Brunkhorst does not explicitly mention the paradox of solidarity, he indirectly touches upon it his discussion of how pre-modern forms of solidarity not only alleviated suffering but also caused it. As Brunkhorst convincingly demonstrates, the solidarity of civic friendship in ancient Greece came at the price of exclusion of "the barbarians, foreigners, women, and slaves" (Brunkhorst 2005: 20). Similarly, while the Christian solidarity of brotherly love overcame the particularism of civic friendship, it did so only at the cost of "rigid asceticism" and "hostility toward the body and sexuality" violently enforced if needed. The universal solidarity of Christian brotherly love thus resulted in a "radical devaluation of this worldly life and, in the final analysis, a trivializing of the other person in his or her concrete, bodily suffering" (Brunkhorst 2005: 41, 43). However, while Brunkhorst identifies the excesses of the paradox in previous forms of solidarity, he fails to consider how the paradox might apply to his own ideal of solidarity.

The closest he comes is when he discusses the deconstructivist insight that all politics includes exclusion. Here Brunkhorst insists that even though no ideal can be properly actualized, we are not "forced into resignation or toward the tragic insight of Derrida into the unavoidability of the contradiction, which admits politics only as deconstruction, as postmodern, aesthetic play with the paradox" (Brunkhorst 2005: 66). Brunkhorst accepts that "every transformation from text into norms,

that every legal instantiation of the constitution repeatedly forgets and excludes someone all over again, and never includes everyone in every legally relevant aspect" (Brunkhorst 2005: 67). However, he insists that "this unavoidable fact carries little weight in view of the real progress that contributes to diminishing or bridging the gaps between declared and positively effective norms" (Brunkhorst 2005: 67). We must try to bridge the gap between ideal and real democracy as much as possible. In those instances where democratic self-rule cannot be instantiated, "human rights must step into the gap" (Brunkhorst 2005: 74). As Brunkhorst puts it, "[human rights] are a placeholder for democratic autonomy" (Brunkhorst 2005: 74). Brunkhorst answers the deconstructive criticism that every instantiation of solidarity must exclude someone by offering human rights to make up for such exclusions. This is a great theoretical move, but it does not bring Brunkhorst out of the problems of the paradox for he does not consider how the ideal of solidarity *itself* can become a cause of suffering.

With all the attention Brunkhorst gives to globalization, international law and the EU, it is striking that he makes no mention of anti-EU movements. To be fair, Brunkhorst acknowledges that globalization is both a threat and a solution to the crisis of solidarity (Brunkhorst 2005: 118), but he seems to think that these problems will be overcome in the global democratic community to come. However, unless we seriously consider the sentiments that propel the contemporary resurrection of far-right movements around the world from Trump in the U.S. to Marine Le Pen, Nigel Farage and Victor Orban in Europe, the attempt to build global solidarity is highly likely to prove counter-productive. Brunkhorst's global democratic community is likely to be seen by many nationalists as a threat which must be vehemently opposed.

In conclusion, without a consideration of the paradoxical nature of solidarity, Brunkhorst's theory of global democratic solidarity remains incomplete. The problems with Brunkhorst's approach illustrate the need to consider the paradox of solidarity in detail. Instead of trying to overcome the paradox, we must try to negotiate it in more productive ways. This thesis aims to help us do so by giving us a better understanding of the paradox and by providing reflections on how best to build solidarity given its paradoxical character.

0.3 Chapter outline

I proceed in the following manner: Chapter 1 provides a rational reconstruction of the emergence of the modern concept of solidarity. I show how the ancient concept of solidarity was translated into modern terms to mean a kind of solidity which can alleviate suffering. I argue that there were good

reasons for the concept to arise in the transition to modernity in response to novel forms of suffering brought on by individualization and disembedding. In order to substantiate my argument, I discuss how Karl Marx and Emile Durkheim both identified forms of suffering associated with modern solitary life and proposed modes of solidity in order to alleviate this suffering.

In Chapter 2, I go on to consider the paradox of solidarity and the mechanisms fuelling it in detail. I do so by drawing on insights from Friedrich Nietzsche and William Connolly about debt, suffering, and responsibility to develop the idea of an economy of suffering. I argue that solidarity-building participates in this economy by distributing, circulating, and producing suffering. I scrutinize the causes of the paradox by examining the temptation to externalize suffering. I show how this creates dynamic effects where the distribution of suffering affects the total amount of suffering. The agent-specific temptation to externalize suffering may result in an increase in suffering as a whole.

In Chapter 3, I examine how we can best approach solidarity in the face of its paradoxical nature. I do so by drawing on the work of Richard Rorty and Hans-Georg Gadamer. By putting the two in conversation with each other I try to draw out the strengths and weaknesses of both to develop a strategy for how to best deal with the paradox. I dedicate most of my discussion to the question of whether solidarity must be based on sameness as Rorty claims. I draw on Gadamer's idea of understanding as a fusion of horizons to argue that solidarity need not be based on sameness. I conclude the chapter by distilling my discussions of Rorty and Gadamer into a double-ended strategy for how to work on solidarity from within the paradox to reduce the amount of suffering in circulation: we must both open ourselves to the suffering of outsiders and adjust our notions of solidity to make them as inclusive as possible and to reduce the extent to which they cause others to suffer.

Finally, in Chapter 4, I consider how this strategy can be applied to the problems of solidarity facing us today. I show how the paradox of solidarity was renegotiated during the 20th century as Leftist political movements came to power, and examine the paradoxes of individualization, neoliberalism, globalization, and nationalism that make up the paradoxical terrain of late modernity. I conclude by discussing how nationalists and humanists might engage in a dialogue with each other to become more aware of each other's strengths and weaknesses and adjust their conceptions of solidarity accordingly. The hope is that both will rework their notions of solidity to become more attentive to the suffering of others without thereby undermining solidarity altogether.

Chapter 1:
The Solidarity of the Moderns

> "Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold."
>
> - W.B. Yeats (1919).

Before we can consider the paradox of solidarity, we need to know what solidarity is. In this chapter I examine the concept of solidarity and its history in order to provide a theory of what solidarity is. More specifically, I provide an account of why the concept of solidarity emerged as a response to modernization which entailed individualization and disembedding. As I will explain shortly, my account is a rational reconstruction in the sense that it shows why there were *good* reasons for the concept of solidarity to arise given the nature of modern social life. By dissolving the solidity of pre-modern life, these processes created new, specifically modern forms of suffering such as alienation and anomie. The modern concept of solidarity, I argue, may be defined as the kind of solidity which can alleviate suffering. To see why and how solidity can alleviate suffering, we need to understand how the modern concept of solidarity emerged historically.

I start by noting how the modern meaning of solidarity emerged historically in the wake of the French Revolution and provide some methodological considerations on what it means to provide a rational reconstruction of this emergence. I then explain the emergence of the modern concept of solidarity by showing how each of the elements of the ancient concept of solidarity found in Roman legal code was translated into its modern meaning. I elaborate my theory of solidarity by discussing what solidity is and how it can alleviate suffering caused by individualization. After having presented my rational reconstruction of solidarity, I illustrate it via a discussion of how solidarity figures in the work of the classic sociologists Karl Marx and Emile Durkheim. I show how Marx and Durkheim respectively analysed modern forms of suffering such as alienation, pauperism, egoism, and anomie and suggested how to remedy these forms of suffering via forms of solidity such as class solidarity, communism and organic solidarity. Finally, I compare Marx and Durkheim's respective analyses of solidarity and show how they help illustrate what Hauke Brunkhorst has called the two structural inclusion problems of modernity: desocialization and proletarianization. I begin by looking at the history of the concept of solidarity.

1.1 The birth of modern solidarity

Human communities are self-reflective. Not only do human beings live together in groups, but they reflect on the fact that they live together. Given this circumstance, it is perhaps not surprising that some think of solidarity as a perennial problem of politics. Steven Lukes, for example, writes that "preoccupation with a lack or decline of solidarity is ancient, perennial and, it seems, eternal" (Lukes 1999: 273). This is, however, not quite right. While the question of political community in its most abstract form might be perennial, the question of *solidarity* is distinctly modern. As Hauke Brunkhorst notes, "solidarity is a thoroughly modern concept" (Brunkhorst 2005: 1; see also Preuss 1999: 283). To say that the decline of solidarity is a perennial concern it to overlook the distinct political problems of the modern period.[9] Before the advent of modernity, solidarity was not a political but a legal concept. More specifically, solidarity was a Roman legal concept denoting a joint liability for a debt (Bayertz 1999: 3; Metz 1999: 191; Wildt 1999: 209). Steinar Stjernø tells us that "the transformation of the legal concept of solidarity into a political concept seems to have begun in the latter half of the eighteenth century" (Stjernø 2005: 27). It was only after the French Revolution that the concept gained a prominent place in French political discourse and only in the 1840s that the concept spread to England and Germany (Stjernø 2005: 30).[10] It is striking that the concept of solidarity as we know it today emerged at a time when profound transformations: political revolutions around Europe undermined the prevailing political structures, the industrial revolution radically changed the mode of production, and the Enlightenment called religious authorities into question. These transformations laid the foundations for the norms, practices, and institutions associated with modernity.

How do we explain that the concept of solidarity as we know it today came to prominence at this particular point in time? This is not the place to provide a detailed empirical account of how the concept gained prominence historically. For our purposes the interesting question is not how the

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[9] While the modern meaning of solidarity emerged only in the wake of the French Revolution, many authors use the term anachronistically referring to earlier forms of community as solidarity. To be clear, I use solidarity only where conditions of modernity apply. However, quotes may involve a usage of the term which goes beyond this strict definition. I have not corrected these instances where the term is applied to traditional societies.

[10] During the French Revolution the concept of fraternity was more predominant as the famous slogan "liberté, égalité, fraternité" suggests. In the decades after the revolution, the concept of solidarity took the place of fraternity (Brunkhorst 2005: 59). The concept of solidarity is closely related to fraternity, but different from it. Hauke Brunkhorst notes that "whereas 'fraternity' originally had Christian connotations, 'solidarity' was from Roman law and so had republican connotations" (Brunkhorst 2005: 59). For the purposes of the thesis, I focus exclusively on the concept of solidarity.

concept was *actually* brought into discourse, but rather why it makes sense that it did. What I want to offer here is a rational reconstruction of why the concept of solidarity was a fitting response to the historical context during which it came to prominence. That is, I try to show how the internal structure of the concept makes sense in relation to the specific political context of modernity. I will remain agnostic on the question of whether these were *actually* the reasons why people took up the concept. I shall remain satisfied if my explanation makes clear why the concept of solidarity is distinctly modern.

The advantage of a rational reconstruction rather than an empirical-historical explanation, is that the former provides us with reasons why the concept should be important to us. In contrast, a causal explanation of why solidarity became an important concept might reveal that it did so for wholly accidental reasons, in which case we would be left to wonder why we should even bother with the concept today except for historical curiosity. We might say that whereas an empirical-historical explanation provides us with reasons why something happened, a rational reconstruction provides us with *good* reasons for why something should happen. In other words, the former is causal, the latter is normative. This is not to say that a causal account of the emergence of the concept would be uninteresting, only to justify its omission for the present purposes. As far as I know no one has undertaken such an investigation as of yet, but it would be interesting to see how it compares to the explanation provided here. To see why the modern concept of solidarity makes good sense in regard to the political context of modernity, I start by considering the ancient meaning of the concept.

1.2 Solidarity, ancient and modern

As noted above, solidarity was originally a Roman legal term used to describe a collective responsibility for debt. As Brunkhorst explains, "the Roman legal concept *in solidum* means an obligation for the whole, joint liability (…), common debt, solidary obligation: *obligation in solidum*. One for all, all for one. Everyone assumes responsibility for anyone who cannot pay his debt, and he is conversely responsible for everyone else" (Brunkhorst 2005: 2, italics in original).We might say then that the original concept of solidarity had two constituent parts, "debt" and "collective responsibility," and that the original meaning of solidarity was defined by the relationship between these two parts. To grasp the original concept of solidarity, one needs to understand what "debt" is and what "collective responsibility" is and how the two relate to each other. In what follows I will argue that the modern concept of solidarity mirrors this structure but translates each term into the political language of modernity: "debt" becomes "suffering" and "collective responsibility" becomes "solidity." Let us consider each part in turn starting with debt/suffering.

1.2.1 From debt to suffering

The ancient concept of solidarity concerns debt. Assuming that there is a connection between the ancient and the modern meaning of solidarity, we are bound to ask how the modern concept of solidarity is related to debt. We should start by noting that while debt is often associated with economic matters, as is also the case for the original Roman legal meaning of the concept, it need not be. In abstract terms, debt is a lack of something, a negativity. The modern concept of solidarity also concerns a form of negativity, namely suffering. Suffering may be defined as the experience of something unpleasant and as such it is negative phenomenon. It can take many forms: poverty, sickness, hunger, and so on. Suffering is a part of solidarity in that we do not declare our solidarity with someone unless they experience some kind of suffering.

However, humans have always suffered and so the mere fact of human suffering is insufficient to explain the specific relevance that the modern concept of solidarity has in relation to the political context of modernity. To grasp why suffering helps explain the emergence of modern solidarity, we need to consider the historically specific forms of suffering that modernity brought with it.

Surely modernization has liberating effects as individuals are no longer cast into the moulds of traditional roles but are given the reigns of their own life. In short, individualization yields autonomy (Brunkhorst 2005: 93). However, autonomy comes at a price. The modern individualistic form of life entails new forms of suffering such as alienation and anomie. I discuss both alienation and anomie in more detail below, but for now the important point is that both alienation and anomie involve a distance from others and so are predicated on individualization.

Modernity not only introduced new forms of suffering, but also altered the nature of existing forms of suffering. As Kurt Bayertz has argued, modernization undermined previously existing mechanisms of mutual aid: "the social networks which existed in pre-industrial society – particularly the (extended) family, but also neighborhoods and village communities, private and Church charity – to a large extent forfeit their effectiveness in a situation of mass industrial and urban misery" (Bayertz 1999: 22). Individualization meant that the more general forms of human suffering (sickness, hunger, etc.) to a higher degree had to be faced individually. In this way individualization makes known forms of suffering harder to combat, because problems must be faced individually rather than collectively. In other words, suffering and individualization can be linked either intrinsically (as is the case when individualization itself causes suffering) or instrumentally (as when suffering is extrinsic to individualization, but becomes harder to combat because of individualization).

I discuss the links between individualization and suffering in more detail below in my analysis of Marx and Durkheim. However, before we can examine the connection between suffering and individualization more carefully, we need to consider the collective responsibility/solidity side of the concept of solidarity.

1.2.2 From collective responsibility to solidity

In ancient Roman law, collective responsibility only made sense on the assumption that the debt could be paid back. This point seems trivial when the debt takes an economic form. However, when debt is translated into suffering, the point becomes more contentious. Through large parts of human history, suffering has been religiously justified as something that had to be endured. However, secularization changed this picture. Once religious authority was dethroned suffering was no longer a (God-)given, but rather a contingent condition which could be changed. As Bayertz remarks, "since the end of the 18th century, poverty and need have gradually been perceived less as the consequences of an inevitable 'Fate' for which nobody is to blame, and more as a *social problem*; they have ceased to be attributed to external powers, and instead are traced back to social structures which, in turn, are the product of human action, and from which human protagonists profit" (Bayertz 1999: 22, italics in original).

Instead of seeing social structures as God-given, the belief began to spread that society was a human construct. And if humans make social structures they can also remake them. As Bayertz puts it, "since whatever was created by human beings can also be altered by human beings, this change in perception has led to the conclusion that poverty and need can be eliminated or at least mitigated by an appropriate reorganization of social conditions" (Bayertz 1999: 22). In this way modernization installed the belief that something could be done to alleviate suffering. Suffering is no longer seen as a fundamental human condition which must be accepted, but has become something which humans can actively struggle to overcome. As Talal Asad puts it, from a secular perspective suffering is "thought of as a human condition that secular agency must eliminate universally" (Asad 2003: 67).[11]

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[11] Asad further makes the interesting point that the secular Enlightenments preoccupation with the elimination of suffering was informed by a particular view of humanness and a "desire to create new human subjects" (Asad 2003: 110). This in turn means that some forms of suffering are deemed acceptable while others must be combatted depending on whether they live up to the secular ideal of human subjectivity. As Asad puts it, "the modern hostility is not simply to pain, it is to pain that does not accord with a particular conception of being human – *and that is therefore in excess*" (Asad 2003: 123, italics in original). Asad's point effectively raises the question of which forms of suffering we should accept and which we should try to alleviate. While this is surely an important question for a theory of solidarity, it goes beyond the scope of this thesis.

The modern concept of solidarity is predicated on this assumption. If suffering was a given beyond human activity, solidarity would be pointless. So in the same way that the ancient concept of solidarity assumed that debt could be paid back, the modern concept of solidarity is based on the idea that suffering can be alleviated.

The similarities do not end here. The way in which modern solidarity confronts suffering is strikingly similar to the way ancient solidarity confronts debt. In the same way that people united to take collective responsibility for debt under ancient Roman law, so solidarity in its modern meaning concerns bringing people together. This "togetherness" aspect can take different forms and go by different names: social cohesion, social integration, union, fellowship, community, and more. I suggest that all of these forms of togetherness associated with solidarity can be brought together under the concept of solidity. As Hauke Brunkhorst says, "solidarity is solid. *Solidus* is dense and firm" (Brunkhorst 2005: 2, italics in original).

To see why the concept of solidity best captures this aspect of modern solidarity, it is useful to consider Ferdinand Tönnies' famous distinction between *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft* (Tönnies 2001).[12] Tönnies describes the difference between the two in the following terms: "all kinds of social co-existence that are familiar, comfortable and exclusive are to be understood as belonging to Gemeinschaft. Gesellschaft means life in the public sphere, in the outside world. In Gemeinschaft we are united from the moment of our birth with our own folk for better or for worse. We go out into Gesellschaft as if into a foreign land" (Tönnies 2001: 18). Gemeinschaft describes an "organic" community where members are defined by their membership in the community (Tönnies 2001: 17). Gesellschaft, on the other hand, is a "purely mechanical construction" where members relate to the whole in a detached and instrumental manner (Tönnies 2001: 17). Gesellschaft is the form society takes under conditions of individualization.

The transition from pre-modernity to modernity entails a transition from Gemeinschaft to Gesellschaft. Although it is not always clear from Tönnies whether the transition is complete,[13] the direction from Gemeinschaft to Gesellschaft is evident from his statement that "Community [Gemeinschaft] is old, Society [Gesellschaft] is new" (Tönnies 2001: 19). In contrast with pre-modern times where members of the community were integrated vis-à-vis their identities as members, modern individuals are

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[12] Gemeinschaft is usually translated as "community" and Gesellschaft is usually translated as "society". For the sake of clarity I will use the original German words, Gemeinschaft and Gesellschaft.
[13] For the argument that Tönnies believed that any social formation is a mixture of the two, see Harris 2001.

strangers to each other and estranged from the collective. Rather than being immersed in the community, modern individual identity is "ontologically prior to that of the wider group" (Harris 2001: xviii). As a consequence, attachment to the collective is merely secondary and instrumental.

How then should we situate the concept of solidarity in relation to the distinction between Gemeinschaft and Gesellschaft? As solidarity usually connotes unity and collectivity, it would seem obvious to associate solidarity with Gemeinschaft. However, this would be at odds with the fact that the modern concept of solidarity emerged only when modernization was moving us away from Gemeinschaft. Ulrich Preuss is therefore right to say that "the concept of solidarity is not rooted in the *Gemeinschaft*, but instead an inherent element of the *Gesellschaft*" (Preuss 1999: 283). As Preuss further explains, "the concept of solidarity unites two seemingly contradictory elements: on the one hand it includes duties of care which are essentially based on *personal* feelings of sympathy and hence linked to *Gemeinschaft*-like types of communities; on the other, these duties are directed towards *impersonal addressees*, namely aliens, be they individuals or groups. Solidarity exacts duties of brotherhood vis-à-vis aliens" (Preuss 1999: 283, italics in original).

This seeming contradiction can be resolved once we understand solidarity as the attempt to retrieve what was lost in the transition from Gemeinschaft to Gesellschaft. This loss was aptly captured by Marx and Engels in their famous proclamation that "all that is solid melts into air" (Marx & Engels 1978: 476). In the modernization process we lose the solidity associated with Gemeinschaft. We can understand solidarity as an attempt to provide solidity in a world melting into air. In order to define the solidity-part of solidarity, it is useful to consider its analogous meaning in physics.

1.3 What is solidity?

The idea of the atom originates in Ancient Greece where philosophers such as Leucippus and Democritus put forth the idea that the universe is composed of atoms (Berryman 2011). Atoms were considered the most fundamental building blocks of matter: "atomos" literally means "indivisible."[14] While ancient theories of atomism have long been rejected, the atom is still considered the basic building block of the physical world. Ancient atomism was based on the idea that we can understand the universe by examining what is most fundamental to it. Naturally the most fundamental is that which cannot be divided – if division was possible, the resulting parts of that division would be more fundamental.

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[14] "A" meaning "not" and "tomos" meaning "to divide".

The modern intellectual outlook shares this strategy as it also focuses on that which cannot be divided: the *in-dividual*. Individuals are the fundamental building blocks of modern society. While modern physics has shown that atoms can in fact be divided, they are still considered the fundamental building blocks of the universe. Similarly, while Freud has long ago argued that the individual is in fact divided (Freud 1990), the individual is still considered the fundamental unit of modern social life.

Like individuals, atoms do not exist in isolation. Rather they exist in molecular structures which define the state of matter. In the solid state, atoms are grouped together in a firm structure which grants a certain degree of resistance against outside influences. If you apply pressure to a solid object it will retain its shape until the pressure becomes intense enough for it to break. Fluids and gases on the other hand cannot easily hold their shape. As Zygmunt Bauman puts it: "fluids travel easily. They 'flow', 'spill', 'run out', 'splash', 'pour over', 'leak', 'flood', 'spray', 'drip', 'seep', 'ooze'" (Bauman 2000: 2).

Solidity can be defined as the binding together of dispersed individuals. Binding means both establishing solid bonds between the individuals and establishing a boundary which separates those individuals from an outside. Solidity binds individuals together in such a way that there is a clear boundary between inside and outside. In the case of solidarity this boundary demarcates those who are part of the solidary group and those who are not. Because solids maintain their shape it is easy to distinguish which individuals belong to which solid. Solidarity usually extends to a limited number of people.

By binding together I do not mean bringing into closer physical proximity. Individuals can be in close proximity of each other in a liquid state. However, their proximity is not stable and could easily change by external force. Solidity on the other hand brings individuals together in a stable way. Solidity is thus the opposite of atomization, disintegration and isolation. As in the case of physics, the solidity of solidarity can give individuals resilience to withstand pressure and power to affect the world more forcefully. To see the power solidity can give, consider the difference between throwing a (solid) rock at a window and hurling (fluid) water at that same window. The way in which solidity empowers individuals by bringing them together make it attractive for those who feel powerless on their own.

If modernity pulls people apart, is it possible to find resources within modernity to bring them together again? This is where solidity enters the picture. If I am right that in modernity, suffering is both intrinsically and instrumentally linked to individualization, it makes sense to try to alleviate suffering by countering individualization. Just as the ancient concept of solidarity is an attempt to provide a form of solidity in the form of joint liability, so the modern concept of solidarity tries to provide a kind of

solidity which can alleviate the suffering caused by the decline of Gemeinschaft. The solidity of solidarity alleviates suffering by giving individuals a sense of togetherness and empowers individuals to battle suffering through joint action.

It is important to note that solidity does not necessarily imply the physical hardness we associate with solid objects, for example rocks. Solidity can also be imagined. This is point is best illustrated by considering Benedict Anderson's pioneering work on nationalism (Anderson 2006). Anderson argues that the nation is best understood as an "imagined political community" (Anderson 2006: 6). It is imagined because "the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion" (Anderson 2006: 6). By thinking of themselves as part of a nation, individuals are imaginatively brought together without ever being physically united.

Anderson masterfully traces the historical developments which enabled the creation of such imagined communities, one of which is the advent of print capitalism. Print capitalism provided the technological basis for the newspaper.[15] The circulation of newspapers creates a sense of imagined community as each reader imagines that others like him are reading the same newspaper at the same time (Anderson 2006: 35). But the very form of the newspaper also contributes as the newspaper brings together unrelated events on the basis of calendrical coincidence. As Anderson remarks, "obviously most of them happen independently, without the actors being aware of each other or of what the others are up to. The arbitrariness of their inclusion and juxtaposition (…) shows that the *linkage* between them is imagined" (Anderson 2006: 33, my emphasis). In this way, the circulation of newspapers helps create and maintain an idea of homogenous empty time marked by "temporal coincidence, and measured by clock and calendar" (Anderson 2006: 24). By reading the newspaper, we come to imagine ourselves as part of bigger nations whose boundaries go beyond our physical presence: "the idea of a sociological organism moving calendrically through homogenous, empty time is a precise analogue of the idea of the nation, which is also conceived as a *solid* community moving steadily down (or up) history" (Anderson 2006: 26, my emphasis).

In other words, "the solidity of a single community"– the nation – goes beyond physical proximity (Anderson 2006: 27). National solidarity is imaginary. We are solidary with people we have never met. Modern mass societies are complex to such a degree that we only know a small fraction of our fellow

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[15] Anderson argues that the circulation of novels had a similar effect, but for sake of simplicity I focus here on the newspaper.

citizens. The imaginary aspect of solidarity is important in this regard because it allows solidarity to function as a placeholder for the closely-knit local community which modernity does away with. Our imagination allow us to have concern for people whose physical presence we have never experienced. In others words, solidity need not be physical. Solidarity can unite people without physically bringing them together.

I have argued that the modern concept of solidarity is best understood as a kind of solidity which can alleviate suffering. The concept of solidarity arose as a way to try to bring together, what modernity had brought apart. The challenge was to find a centripetal counterforce to the centrifugal powers of disembedding and individualization. In other words, solidarity was an attempt to combat the suffering inherent in the modern condition through some form of solidity. In order to illustrate what this entails, I will now consider how solidarity figures in the works in two of the founding fathers of sociology: Karl Marx and Emile Durkheim.

1.4 Marx and Durkheim on solidarity

Many early sociologists were preoccupied with the question of solidarity.[16] I focus on Marx and Durkheim because their work well illustrates my definition of solidarity as solidity which can alleviate suffering. Further, by comparing the two we see how the relationship between suffering and solidity can be theorized in different ways resulting in different conceptions of solidarity. Finally, Marx and Durkheim are especially interesting figures as their works form the basis of the two main traditions in the literature on solidarity. While the tradition associated with Durkheim is concerned with finding social order and stability, the tradition associated with Marx views the existing social order as a pretext for domination and exploitation. By examining both Marx and Durkheim we see how the modern concept of solidarity is ambiguous with regards to question of social order: solidarity can both be seen as that which maintains social order, but also as a weapon against it. I start by considering Marx's ideas about solidarity before moving on to Durkheim. After having considered each in turn, I provide a comparison between them, trying to give a more general picture of how individualization, suffering, and solidity are linked together in modernity.

1.4.1 Marx on suffering: anomie and pauperism

Let us start by considering Marx's analysis of suffering in modern society. Marx offered an extensive critique of the economic system of modernity: capitalism. We can distinguish between three aspects of

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[16] For a survey of how the concept of solidarity figured in early social theory, see Stjernø 2005: Chapter 1.

Marx's overall critique of capitalism: 1) a functional argument, 2) a justice-oriented argument, and 3) an ethical argument.[17] In short, the functional critique is that capitalism is inherently dysfunctional: for example it tends to produce economic crises. The justice-oriented critique is that capitalism is based on exploitation and thus inherent unjust. Finally, the ethical argument is that the kind of life that capitalism produces is a bad life. I cannot here cover all aspects of Marx's critique. To be sure a complete picture of Marx's critique of capitalism needs to include all three elements and show how they fit together. But for the sake of our present purposes, I will allow myself to focus on the third aspect: the ethical argument. More specifically, I will consider Marx's analyses of alienation and pauperism.

Tönnies already touches on the theme of alienation when he remarks that "we go out into Gesellschaft as if into a *foreign* land" (Tönnies 2001: 18, my emphasis). In Gesellschaft, individuals are alien to the social world they inhabit. In the *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844* Karl Marx identified four forms of alienation inherent in the social formation of capitalism. First, the worker is alienated from what he produces: "the worker is related to the *product* of his *labour* as to an *alien* object." (Marx 1978a: 72, italics in original). Second, the worker is alienated from the activity of production itself. Marx thinks this is logically entailed in the first form of alienation: "how would the worker come to face the product of his activity as a stranger, were it not that in the very act of production he was estranging himself from himself?" (Marx 1978a: 73). Marx argues that taken together these two forms of alienation constitute a third kind: alienation from man's "species being."[18] In capitalist society, the life of the species becomes a mere means of individual life: "it estranges man's own body from him, as it does external nature and his spiritual essence, his *human* being" (Marx 1978a: 77, italics in original). Finally, Marx argues that these three forms of alienation entail that individuals are alienated from each other: "if the product of labour does not belong to the worker, if it confronts him as an alien power, this can only be because it belongs to some *other man than the worker*" (Marx 1978a: 78, italics in original). This is the fourth form of alienation.

Under the conditions of modern capitalism, the individual must struggle to relate to a world which confronts him as alien: "the more powerful the alien objective world becomes which he creates over-against himself, the poorer he himself – his inner world – becomes, the less belongs to him as his own" (Marx 1978a: 72). As the worker is alienated, his work becomes coerced rather than voluntary and as a result "man (the worker) no longer feels himself to be freely active in any but his animals functions"

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[17] I borrow this distinction from Rahel Jaeggi who makes it with regards to critiques of capitalism generally. See Jaeggi 2016: 3.

[18] The original German is "Gattungswesen" – sometimes translated alternatively as "species-essence."

(Marx 1978a: 74). Marx's critique of alienation is a critique of an isolated life, where the individual cannot maintain a proper relation to the outer world and his fellow beings.

However, capitalism not only alienates the worker but also impoverishes him to such an extent that he is left without the material means needed for human flourishing. Marx is the first to acknowledge the great achievements of capitalism in terms of productive power. As Marx and Engels put it in *The Communist Manifesto*, the modern bourgeoisie has "accomplished wonders far surpassing Egyptian pyramids, Roman aqueducts, and Gothic cathedrals" (Marx & Engels 1978: 476). However, while the bourgeois class profits from capitalism, the working class suffers greatly: "the modern labourer (…) instead of rising with the progress of industry, sinks deeper and deeper below the conditions of existence of his own class. He becomes a pauper, and pauperism develops more rapidly than population and wealth" (Marx & Engels 1978: 483). As the means of production develops, the nature of work becomes more and more machine-like: "the work of the proletarians has lost all individual character, and consequently, all charm for the workman. He becomes an appendage of the machine, and it is only the most simple, most monotonous, and most easily acquired knack, that is required of him" (Marx & Engels 1978: 479).

In addition, the worker also receives less and less in compensation for his work: "as the repulsiveness of the work increases, the wage decreases" (Marx & Engels 1978: 479). According to Marx the wage sinks until it reaches "the means of subsistence that he [the worker] requires for his maintenance, and for the propagation of his race" (Marx & Engels 1978: 479). Needless to say, this does not provide the worker with the material means to flourish. While pauperism only pertains to the proletariat, the proletariat increases day by day and so the suffering associated with pauperism becomes more and more widespread (Marx & Engels 1978: 480).

1.4.2 Marx on solidity: class solidarity and communism

We have seen how Marx identified two forms of suffering associated with the kind of life that modern capitalist society engenders: alienation and pauperism. However, Marx did not only diagnose the ills of modern capitalist society, he also proposed how to remedy them. As Marx's well-known eleventh thesis on Feuerbach reminds us, "the philosophers have only *interpreted* the world, in various ways; the point, however, is to *change* it." (Marx 1978b: 145, italics in original). For Marx the only way to overcome alienation and pauperism was through the transition to communism (Marx 1978a: 84). Just as the bourgeoisie had the historical task of overthrowing feudalism, so the proletariat was granted the historical task of overthrowing capitalism. Of course this would not happen without struggle against

the ruling class of the bourgeoisie. Such struggle required social organization. Luckily the forces of history was on the side of the proletariat, or at least so Marx thought. At the same time as capitalism was destroying earlier Gemeinschaft-like communal ties, it created new social conditions favourable to the social organization of workers by bringing them together in factories (Stjernø 2005: 43). As the struggle progressed, Marx imagined, the proletarian class would become more and more united: "this organization of the proletarians into a class, and consequently into a political party, is continually being upset again by the competition between the workers themselves. But it ever rises up again, stronger, firmer, mightier" (Marx & Engels 1978: 481). Instead of suffering on their own, workers are to unite in their opposition to the forces of capitalism. As the famous ending of the Communist Manifesto reads: "working men of all countries, unite!" (Marx & Engels 1978: 500).

Marx himself rarely uses the concept of solidarity.[19] However, as Steinar Stjernø has noted, while the term solidarity was not an established part of Marx's vocabulary, Marx still expressed the idea of solidarity by using other equivalent terms (Stjernø 2005: 45). It is not hard to see how the concept applies to Marx's writings: in order to fight the ills of capitalism, including alienation and pauperization, Marx deemed it necessary for individuals to unite. This is precisely how I defined solidarity above: solidity which alleviates suffering. Given this fact, even if Marx himself rarely used the concept, it is not surprising that his work since became one of the most, if not the most, important source of inspiration for solidarity movements in the 20th century.

As mentioned in the introduction, solidarity can both be a means and an end. This is also the case with Marx. Class solidarity was not only a necessary instrument in the struggle to overthrow capitalism, it was also a prefiguration of the communist society to come. For Marx, class solidarity was a way to overcome the isolated suffering of alienated workers in a capitalist society. However, while class solidarity might create temporary comradery, only the social conditions of communism could secure and maintain a genuine community (Stjernø 2005: 45). Stjernø suggests that Marx was in fact operating with two ideas of solidarity: an instrumentalist conception tied to solidarity in class struggle and an ideal conception of solidarity associated with the communist community to come (Stjernø 2005: 46).

We have seen how Marx identifies two dominant forms of suffering in modern society – alienation and pauperization – and suggested class solidarity and communism as the kinds of solidity that would eradicate this suffering. Let us now turn to Durkheim and his theory of solidarity.

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[19] For a discussion of Marx's use of "'solidarity," see Stjernø 2005: 43-46.

1.4.3 Durkheim on suffering: anomie and egoism

Like Marx, Durkheim was preoccupied with how the modernization process gave rise to new forms of suffering. In *The Division of Labour in Society*, Durkheim argues that traditional societies are characterized by a form of solidarity based on sameness (Durkheim 1984). Durkheim calls this form of solidarity "mechanical solidarity." The name can be a bit misleading as it seems to connote the kinds of instrumental rationality characteristic of Gesellschaft. Mechanical solidarity, however, belongs to Gemeinschaft. As Durkheim stresses, "the word does not mean that the solidarity is produced by mechanical and artificial means" (Durkheim 1984: 84). Rather, the idea is that people are so enveloped in their communities, that they follow its movements mechanically. As Durkheim says, "in societies where this solidarity is highly developed the individual (…) does not belong to himself; he is literally a thing at the disposal of society" (Durkheim 1984: 85).

The sameness on which mechanic solidarity is based comes from the fact that everyone is part of a greater collective being (Durkheim 1984: 84). As Durkheim himself puts it, "a social cohesion exists whose cause can be traced to a certain conformity of each individual consciousness to a common type" (Durkheim 1984: 60). In this way Durkheim associates solidarity with social integration and cohesion. Mechanical solidarity is the kind of social cohesion which stems from everyone being alike.

As we saw with Tönnies, the modernization process undermines this form of social cohesion associated with Gemeinschaft: "as evolution advances, the bonds that attach the individual to his family, to his native heath, to the traditions that the past has bequeathed to him, to the collective practices of the group – all these become loosened" (Durkheim 1984: 332-333). Durkheim analyses this differentiation process in terms of the division of labour. In modern society, labour becomes increasingly functionally differentiated so that each job is a highly specialized part of the production process: "inside factories, not only are jobs demarcated, becoming extremely specialized, but each product is itself a speciality entailing the existence of others" (Durkheim 1984: 1).

This functional differentiation process undermines mechanical solidarity. Mechanical solidarity based on sameness is no longer possible in a society where people are individualized through functional differentiation. As Durkheim states, "the division of labour cannot (…) be pushed too far without being a source of disintegration" (Durkheim 1984: 294). Durkheim thinks that such disintegration is detrimental to human flourishing. In the face of declining mechanical solidarity and increasing individualization and disembedding, new forms of suffering arise. As Steinar Stjernø notes, "what worried Durkheim was that the process of weakening mechanical solidarity might leave a moral

vacuum that would not automatically be filled. When mechanical solidarity is reduced, social life will suffer if a new form of solidarity does not take its place" (Stjernø 2005: 34).

In his famous study on *Suicide*, Durkheim identifies two forms of suffering prevalent in societies characterized by individualization and erosion of traditional social norms (Durkheim 1979). Durkheim sets out to study suicide as a social phenomenon rather than an exclusively personal one. Some might be inclined to think of suicide as a private matter and thus unsuited for a sociological analysis. In contrast, Durkheim thinks that by examining how suicide rates coalesce into distinct patterns at a macro-level, it can be shown that suicide is related to social environments.

Durkheim suggests four distinct forms of suicide: egoistic, altruistic, anomic, and fatalistic. Each of these kinds of suicide correspond to a particular way in which the individual relates to his social environment. For our purposes the egoistic suicide and the anomic suicide are the most interesting, as they relate to the individualization of modern society. Before considering egoistic suicide and anomic suicide in detail, let me briefly show why altruistic suicide and fatalistic suicide do not pertain to the modern age to the same extent as egoistic suicide and anomic suicide.

Altruistic suicide is, as the name suggests, caused by strong dedication to a collective cause. In modern times, altruistic suicides are "isolated and exceptional" with the notable exception of the army (Durkheim 1979: 229). This is because modern societies lack the high level of social integration which forms the basis of a strong dedication to a collective cause. As Durkheim says "in our contemporary societies, as individual personality becomes increasingly free from the collective personality, such suicides could not be widespread" (Durkheim 1979: 229).

Durkheim is even less concerned with what he calls fatalistic suicides. In fact, he gives so little attention to this type, that he only mentions it in passing in a footnote (Durkheim 1979: 276, footnote 25). The fatalistic suicide is caused by "excessive regulation" which keeps the future of an individual "pitilessly blocked and passions violently choked by oppressive discipline" (Durkheim 1979: 276, footnote 25). As an example of this kind of suicide, Durkheim mentions slave suicides in ancient societies. While Durkheim suggests that this form of suicide could apply to a small number of cases in modern society,[20] he thinks that in general it has "little contemporary importance" and that it "seems useless to dwell upon" (Durkheim 1979: 276, footnote 25).

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[20] Durkheim gives the example of the suicide of a very young man married to a woman who is childless (Durkheim 1979: 276, footnote 25).

While Durkheim deems neither altruistic suicide nor fatalistic suicide very important in the modern age, egoistic suicide and anomic suicide may be said to be of particular importance in modernity. Let us start by considering egoistic suicide.

Durkheim's use of egoism is related to the common usage, but somewhat idiosyncratic. Egoism is a condition where the individual has lost all attachment to his social environment. When individuals are properly socially integrated, they feel responsible in relation to the collective. This attachment to the collective prevents the individual from suicide: "when society is strongly integrated, it holds individuals under its control, considers them at its service and thus forbids them to dispose wilfully of themselves" (Durkheim 1979: 209). However, when such integration is absent, the individual finds himself without any guidelines and consequently struggles to find purpose. Egoism may thus be defined as the feeling of meaninglessness which results from lack of social integration. The egoist is "detached from life because, seeing no goal to which he may attach himself, he feels himself useless and purposeless" (Durkheim 1979: 225). Durkheim thinks that people need social cohesion in order to find purpose with their lives. As he says, "our activity needs an object transcending it" (Durkheim 1979: 209).

As we saw above, Durkheim identifies solidarity with social integration. Durkheim thought mechanical solidarity constituted a form of social integration based on sameness. It is clear then how egoism is caused by a lack of solidarity: without the social integration which solidarity gives us, we are left without the proper means to find purpose in life. Egoism arises in the modern period as mechanical solidarity declines. The social disintegration associated with the transition from Gemeinschaft to Gesellschaft leaves the individual feeling purposeless: "the more the family and community become foreign to the individual, so much the more does he become a mystery to himself, unable to escape the exasperating and agonizing question: to what purpose?" (Durkheim 1979: 212).

Egoistic suicide is thus the inverse of altruistic suicide. Where altruistic suicide is based on a strong dedication to the collective - too much solidarity - egoistic suicide is caused by the detachment from community result from individualization. As Durkheim says, "whereas the latter is due to excessive individuation, the former is caused by too rudimentary individuation" (Durkheim 1979: 221).

Anomic suicide is similar to egoistic suicide in this respect. As Durkheim says, "both spring from society's insufficient presence in individuals" (Durkheim 1979: 258). In other words, both stem from a lack of solidarity understood by Durkheim as social integration. However, the mode of suffering associated with anomie is different from that associated with egoism. Whereas egoism concerns the lack of purpose, anomie involves an imbalance between the desires of an individual and the capacity to

fulfil them. Anomie consists in not being able to achieve what one desires. This mismatch between the purpose and the means for achieving it leads to continuous misery: "to pursue a goal which is by definition unattainable is to condemn oneself to a state of perpetual unhappiness" (Durkheim 1979: 248). The suffering of anomie is succinctly captured by Durkheim's remark that "inextinguishable thirst is constantly renewed torture" (Durkheim 1979: 247).

Just as egoistic suicide is the inverse of altruistic suicide, so anomic suicide is the inverse of fatalistic suicide. Whereas fatalistic suicide ensues from excessive regulation, anomic suicide is caused by "lacking regulation" (Durkheim 1979: 258). While too much regulation is unhealthy, so is too little. Anomic suicide stems from not being able to properly regulate one's passions and thus being subsumed by them: "in anomic suicide, society's influence is lacking in the basically individual passions, thus leaving them without a check-rein" (Durkheim 1979: 258). When the passions are given free reign, desires multiply beyond possible satisfaction. Therefore, the passions must somehow be limited.

According to Durkheim, individuals cannot do this by their own means. Only society is powerful enough to play this role as "it alone has the power necessary to stipulate law and to set the point beyond which the passions must not go" (Durkheim 1979: 249). This makes clear why a lack of solidarity causes anomie. Without solidarity we lack the means of social integration which establishes and maintains social order, and without social order individuals have no external entity to regulate their horizons of desire.

Durkheim associates anomie with sudden drastic upheavals such as disasters and abrupt growth of power and wealth: "whenever serious readjustments take place in the social order, whether or not due to a sudden growth or to an unexpected catastrophe, men are more inclined to self-destruction" (Durkheim 1979: 246). We may therefore see the transition to modernity as a cause of anomie as it caused drastic changes in the social order. The problem, however, is not restricted to the *transition* to modernity. Durkheim observes that the modern mode of production has engendered an insatiable greed in the sphere of trade and industry: "so long as the producer could gain his profits only in his immediate neighborhood, the restricted amount of possible gain could not much overexcite ambition. Now that he may assume to have almost the entire world as his customer, how could passions accept their former confinement in the face of such limitless prospects?" (Durkheim 1979: 255-256). As a result, Durkheim observes, anomie has become a chronic state in the economic sphere: "from top to bottom of the ladder, greed is aroused without knowing where to find ultimate foothold. Nothing can calm it, since its goal is far beyond all it can attain" (Durkheim 1979: 256).

Durkheim here seems to anticipate, perhaps unwittingly, an expansionary logic in the capitalist mode of production which goes beyond the sphere of trade and industry where anomie is already widespread. As Durkheim notes, "a thirst arises for novelties, unfamiliar, pleasures, nameless sensations, all of which lose their savor once known" (Durkheim 1979: 256). Durkheim's formulation succinctly captures the Lacanian theory of desire utilized by contemporary critics of capitalism like Slavoj Žižek to characterize how capitalism perpetuates itself through the constant production of new desires. Once the object of desire has been appropriated, it no longer appears attractive and another object takes its place.[21] If such a self-expansionary drive causes capitalism to subsume more and more domains under the logic of capitalist profit, anomie may spread beyond the sphere of trade and industry (or the sphere of trade and industry may expand to include all other spheres depending on how one looks at it). In any case, the result would be a more generalized condition of anomie.

We have now considered how Durkheim identifies two forms of suffering associated with individualization and lack of solidarity: egoism and anomie. While they may have an affinity for each other (Durkheim 1979: 288), they are distinct modes of suffering. However, Durkheim thinks they can both be countered by the same remedy. Let us know consider the kind of solidarity that Durkheim proposes as an antidote to egoism and anomie in modern society.

1.4.4 Durkheim on solidity: organic solidarity

As mentioned above, both egoism and anomie stem from a lack of solidarity. An obvious way to counter these modes of suffering then would be to restore solidarity. However, Durkheim makes clear that in modern society mechanical solidarity is no longer an option: "whatever assessment we make of the division of labour, we all sense that it is, and increasingly so, one of the fundamental bases of the social order" (Durkheim 1984: 3). Fortunately the very process of the division of labour itself produces a new form of solidarity which Durkheim calls "organic solidarity." As the division of labour progresses, members of society depend increasingly on each other which becomes the basis for organic solidarity. Again Durkheim's terminology can be a bit confusing. While organic solidarity may connote a Gemeinschaft-like community, it belongs with Gesellschaft. The term "organic" signifies that Durkheim views modern society as a kind of organism where each part are differentiated from each other, yet essential to the common enterprise of the organism: "each organ has its own special characteristics and autonomy, yet the greater the unity of the organism, the more marked the

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[21] For a general introduction to Žižek's Lacanian theory of desire, see Žižek 1989. For a formulation of Žižek view on the production of desires in capitalism, see Žižek 2006: 61.

individualisation of the parts" (Durkheim 1984: 85). In other words, organic solidarity is based on interdependence. In contrast to mechanic solidarity which is based on similarity, organic solidarity proceeds on the basis of functional differentiation: "the former type is only possible in so far as the individual personality is absorbed into the collective personality; the latter is only possible if each one of us has a sphere of action that is peculiarly our own, and consequently a personality" (Durkheim 1984: 85).

Durkheim thinks the development from mechanical solidarity to organic solidarity is inevitable for all societies: "it is a law of history that mechanical solidarity, which at first is isolated, or almost so, should progressively lose ground, and organic solidarity gradually become preponderant" (Durkheim 1984: 126). However, if the division of labour itself produces a new form of organic solidarity to take the place of mechanical solidarity, how then can Durkheim also identify forms of suffering, egoism and anomie, associated with a lack of solidarity? The answer seems to be that there is a gap between the time mechanical solidarity declines and the time organic solidarity is fully developed. As Durkheim notes, "the morality we require is only in the process of taking shape" (Durkheim 1984: 340). However, Durkheim thinks that once it does take shape, organic solidarity can help alleviate the suffering associated with egoism and anomie.

To sum up, Durkheim identifies two forms of suffering – egoism and anomie – which he associates with the decline of mechanic solidarity and rise of individualism. Rather than going back to the mechanic solidarity characteristic of Gemeinschaft, Durkheim suggests that the functionally differentiated Gesellschaft itself produces a form of solidarity called organic solidarity. In other words, the suffering associated with egoism and anomie, can be remedied by a kind of solidity of social ties stemming from mutual dependence. In this way Durkheim fits the general pattern of the modern concept of solidarity as a form of solidity which can alleviate individualized forms of suffering.

1.5 Two structural inclusion problems of modernity
In each their own way, Marx and Durkheim exemplify the general structure of modern solidarity outlined above: solidity as a means to alleviate suffering stemming from the transition to modernity. Both of them analysed how individualization produced forms of suffering: alienation and pauperism (Marx) and anomie and egoism (Durkheim). Similarly, both propose forms of solidity as remedies to the ills of individualization. Durkheim thought that the more functionally differentiated society became the more individuals would come to depend on each other. This dependence would create a new form of solidarity as the social ties between the different functions would solidify. Marx on the other hand

thought that class solidarity provided a form of solidity which could crush the capitalist system in order to create new society based on communist solidarity.

Not only does a comparison of Marx and Durkheim give us a better understanding about the forms of suffering inherent in the modern condition and the kinds of solidity which might alleviate this suffering. It also helps us see more clearly what Hauke Brunkhorst has called the "dual inclusion problem of modernity" (Brunkhorst 2005: Chapter 4). The first inclusion problem concerns the "desocialization of the individual" (Brunkhorst 2005: 92). This problem arises directly from the transition from Gemeinschaft to Gesellschaft as people are disembedded from their always already integrated communities. The second problem concerns the "proletarianization of society" (Brunkhorst 2005: 92). This problem regards how modern society excludes certain groups from enjoying the fruits of social cooperation. The distinction between the two inclusion problems of modernity is helpful because it allows us to see how solidarity arose both in response to forms of suffering stemming directly from individualization (the first inclusion problem) and as a means to struggle against forms of suffering which were not directly caused by individualization but which could only be countered by overcoming individualization (the second inclusion problem).

Marx was clearly concerned with both problems, but he tended to emphasize the problem of proletarianization.[22] The focus on the problem of proletarianization is especially clear from Marx's analysis of pauperism. Pauperism is related to individualization but not *directly* caused by it: we can in principle suffer from pauperization in highly integrated groups. The direct cause of the suffering of pauperism is the lack of material means of subsistence and flourishing, such as food, clothes, shelter, etc. But individualization can still be said to *indirectly* cause pauperism as the capitalist system of individual private property distributes material goods in a highly unequal way causing certain groups to lack the material means of flourishing. This explains why Marx deemed class solidarity necessary to overcome pauperism. He saw pauperism as a necessary by-product of the capitalist system of private property rights. In capitalism, pauperism is not caused by shortage of production of goods but by the unequal distribution of goods stemming from the unequal distribution of ownership of the means of production.

This is not to say that Marx was blind to the first inclusion problem of desocialization. Marx was fully aware of how individualization could also be a direct cause of suffering. His analysis of alienation was

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[22] This may not come as a surprise given that it was Marx who popularized the term "proletariat."

meant to show that desocialization introduces a distance between the individual (worker) and the world, including his products, the production process, and his fellow human beings.

Following Stjernø's suggestion that Marx operated with two conceptions of solidarity, class solidarity and communism, we can see how these two conceptions of solidarity correspond to the two ways in which individualization can cause suffering: directly and indirectly. In the case of alienation, suffering is directly caused by individualization and so can only be overcome in a communist society where individualization is no longer a reality. Solidarity in the form of communism *directly* alleviates the suffering of alienation by introducing a form of social life, where the individual is no longer isolated and unable to connect with the world around him. Pauperism, on the other hand, is only indirectly caused by individualization. Therefore, the suffering of pauperism will not be overcome simply by bringing people together. But bringing people together is still a necessary condition for overcoming pauperization because without class solidarity the bourgeois class can simply play the workers out against each other in a race to the bottom. Class solidarity thus functions instrumentally: it does not directly alleviate suffering, but it enables actions which can change the capitalist system of individual private property rights and thus overcome pauperization.

In contrast to Marx, Durkheim was mainly concerned with the first inclusion problem of desocialization. Anomie and egoism are both seen to stem from a lack of social integration. Because the forms of suffering Durkheim identified – anomie and egoism – both stem from excessive individualization, it makes sense that he only needed one concept of solidarity. And because both are caused *directly* by individualization, both can also be overcome directly by bringing the individuals together again. In contrast to Marx, Durkheim does not aim for solidarity to achieve something beyond itself. Organic solidarity is not enlisted instrumentally to serve some other good in the way that Marx enlists class solidarity in the service of overthrowing capitalism.

While Durkheim thought that suffering could be sufficiently countered within the bounds of modern society, Marx deemed it necessary to go beyond it. This difference may be attributed to a disagreement about whether it is possible to find a form of solidity within the bounds of modern capitalist society which does not itself cause suffering. While Durkheim thought organic solidarity provided such solution, Marx thought that the whole system was fundamentally flawed and thus had to be radically changed. We can use this disagreement between Marx and Durkheim as a way to illuminate the problems inherent in each.

From Marx's perspective, Durkheim's vision of organic solidarity implies inequality and exploitation. This is clear when we consider that the division between the bourgeois and the proletariat is itself a form of division of labour: the bourgeois control investments and organize labour, while the proletarians do the manual labour. Organic solidarity implies that the proletarians ought to embrace this division of labour and identify with the larger scheme of social cooperation of which they are a part. Marx would protest that such belief does not constitute true solidarity, but rather amounts to false consciousness serving to justify the exploitation of the workers. Marx helps us see that organic solidarity may be used to justify inequality and exploitation. Furthermore, Marx's emphasis on the international aspects of solidarity may serve as another point of criticism against organic solidarity as it reveals the inherent limits of organic solidarity. Organic solidarity only extends to those part of the organism. As a result, those who are not part of the scheme of social cooperation (foreigners) or those who do not contribute to it (the unemployed) may be excluded from the solidarity circle. Marx thus helps us see the problems of organic solidarity. But Durkheim also help us see the problems of Marx's ideas about solidarity.

The biggest problem of communist solidarity is clearly that it looks more like a dreamed-up utopia than an actually existing form of solidarity. Given that Marx did not say much about communist solidarity, let us instead focus on his idea of class solidarity. One problem with class solidarity concerns its extension. In contrast to Durkheim's notion of organic solidarity which extends to all members of society, class solidarity is limited to those who are identified as belonging to the working class. As a consequence, class solidarity blinds us to the suffering of those who fall outside of the proletariat. However, class solidarity not only limits the concern for the suffering of others but also contributes to it. The idea of class solidarity was premised on the idea that the bourgeoisie class was at least partially responsible for keeping the capitalist system of exploitation and oppression in place.[23] In order to overcome this system, the bourgeois class had to be fought with violent means. This means that the solidarity of the working class was structured around making the bourgeoisie suffer.

In this way, Marx and Durkheim's respective theories of solidarity can be used to reveal the problems in each other. These problems do not mean that we must necessarily reject class solidarity and organic solidarity altogether in the search for a perfect form of solidarity. We should rather examine if there is

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[23] I say "partially" because Marx's historical materialism raises some ambiguities about the question of responsibility, as it is not always clear how much wiggle room individual actors are left with.

something in the concept of solidarity itself which fuels these problems. This is the task I set myself in the next chapter.

1.6 Conclusion: between suffering and solidity

In this chapter, I have provided a rational reconstruction of how the modern concept of solidarity emerged in response to the transition to modernity. First, I have shown how the ancient meaning of solidarity as collective responsibility for debt was translated into the modern concept of solidarity. Debt was translated to suffering and collective responsibility was translated to solidity. I argued that the modern concept of solidarity can be defined as the kind of solidity which can alleviate suffering. To see why this was a rational response to the conditions of modernity I have examined the transition from pre-modernity to modernity via Tönnies' distinction between Gemeinschaft and Gesellschaft. This transition involves individualization which disembeds individuals from their traditional communities. I have further shown how this process both directly and indirectly causes forms of suffering such as alienation and anomie. In this context a search for solidity defined as something that brings individuals together is a rational way to alleviate suffering.

I have illustrated my theory of solidarity via discussion of Marx and Durkheim's respective conceptions of solidarity. Through an examination of Marx and Durkheim's analyses of modern society, I have demonstrated how the transition from Gemeinschaft to Gesellschaft caused forms of suffering which can be categorized under what Brunkhorst has called the two inclusion problems of modernity: desocialization and proletarianization. The first category includes forms of suffering which are directly caused by individualization, such as alienation, anomie, and egoism. The second category includes forms of suffering which are indirectly caused by individualization in that individualization makes them harder to overcome. Marx's analysis of pauperism provides one such instance.

Neither Marx nor Durkheim succeeded in finding a perfect form of solidarity. While class solidarity and organic solidarity may help alleviate the forms of suffering caused by individualization, both forms of solidarity also creates new suffering. This does not necessarily mean that they should be rejected. The point is rather that to better deal with these problems we need a better understanding of their causes. In the next chapter I try to provide this by examining the paradox of solidarity in detail.

Chapter 2:
The Paradox of Solidarity

> "The release of aggression is the best
> palliative for any kind of affliction."
>
> - Friedrich Nietzsche (1956: 263).

In this chapter, I investigate the nature and causes of the paradox of solidarity. The paradox of solidarity is that while solidarity is meant to alleviate solitary suffering, it can also be the cause of suffering for those outside the solidary circle. I say "can" to emphasize that this possibility is not a metaphysical or conceptual necessity. Sometimes solidarity can take the form of a small community seemingly unconcerned with those outside the community. In those cases, solidarity does not imply the destruction of others, but rather disinterestedness in them (and their suffering). We can say that in this case solidarity is limited but not paradoxical. However, in our political world these cases are the exception and they are not the most important ones. Except in the most extreme cases (a hermit community) or the most mundane ones (a local yoga club), we are entangled in pluralistic relations which make the strategy of isolation impossible. And even in those extreme cases, we often find that pluralism re-emerges inside the bounds of solidarity. Eventually the hermit society comes into disagreement about how food should be distributed, the yoga society disagrees about what constitutes the correct practice, and so on. Perhaps one day we will find a form of solidarity which overcomes difference, but until that day come we must live with and against it.

I start by considering the different ways in which members of the solidary circle can relate to the suffering of outsiders. I argue that we need to distinguish between intentions and effects. While solidarity regards our intentions towards others, the paradox of solidarity as I understand it, regards the consequences of our actions, i.e. whether others actually experience suffering as a result of our actions. After having discussed the ways in which intention and effect can converge and diverge, I focus on the case where the intention to cause others to suffer is successful. I elucidate the underlying mechanism of this case by drawing on the ideas of Friedrich Nietzsche and William Connolly regarding debt, suffering, and responsibility to develop the idea of an economy of suffering. I argue that solidarity-building participates in this economy of suffering by circulating, producing, and consuming suffering. I

explain the causes of the paradox by illuminating the temptation to externalize suffering and show how this creates dynamic effects where the distribution of suffering affects the total amount of suffering.

2.1 Solidarity and the suffering of others

As mentioned in the previous chapter, solidity demarcates a clear boundary between inside and outside. Our solidarity extends usually only extends to a limited number of people. When I say that solidarity can cause suffering, I mean that the kind of solidity that solidarity provides can itself become a source of suffering for those outside the solidary group.

Logically we can think of three ways in which solidarity can relate to the suffering of others: it can either alleviate it (positive), be indifferent (neutral), or contribute to it (negative). However, there is an ambiguity in saying that solidarity "relates" to the suffering of outsiders. It can either refer to the intentions of those inside the solidary group or the effects on the outsiders regardless of the intentions of the solidary group. While the two meanings may often coincide, it is important to distinguish between them as our actions do not always produce the effects we intend.

For example, there are several ways in which my intention to cause suffering to someone outside my solidary circle may fail. It may be that my capacities fall short of the ambitions of my intention.[24] In this case, I may simply fail to have *any* impact on the well-being of those I am seeking to hurt. Or it could be that my actions have unintended consequences as a result of the complexity of the social world. In this case, my actions may actually have the opposite effect of what I intended as they may reduce suffering in the other rather than cause it. In both cases, my actions produce a different effect than I intended.

If we adopt this distinction, the logically number of ways in which solidarity can relate to the suffering of others increases from three to nine. This field of possibility can be visualized in a 3x3 matrix as follows (see Table 1):

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[24] This situation corresponds to Durkheim's idea of anomie examined in Chapter 1.

	Positive effect	*Neutral effect*	*Negative effect*
Positive intention	1) Intending to alleviate the suffering of others and succeeding. **Result**: solidarity is extended and functional.	2) Intending to alleviate the suffering of others but failing to make an impact. **Result**: solidarity is extended but dysfunctional.	3) Intending to alleviate the suffering of others but actually contributing to it. **Result**: solidarity is both extended and paradoxical.
Neutral intention	4) Indifferent to the other's suffering but actually alleviating it. **Result**: solidarity is limited but has positive by-products.	5) Indifferent to the other's suffering and no effect on the other. **Result**: solidarity is limited but not paradoxical.	6) Indifferent to the other's suffering but actually contributing to it. **Result**: solidarity is paradoxical.
Negative intention	7) Intending to contribute to the suffering of the other but actually alleviating it. **Result**: a paradox of enmity.	8) Intending to contribute to the suffering of the other but failing to make an impact. **Result**: the paradox is latent but not actualized.	9) Intending to contribute to the suffering of the other and succeeding. **Result**: solidarity is paradoxical.

Table 1: The ways in which solidarity may relate to the suffering of outsiders.

This is where things get a bit complicated. I think it makes most sense to say that solidarity depends on the subjective intention. If we are positively disposed to alleviating the suffering of others, we are in solidarity with them regardless of whether our actions succeed. If such disposition is not present, I do not think we can talk of solidarity regardless of whether our actions have positive side-effects on those others. For example, let us assume that the solidary struggle for better work conditions for Danish workers inspires workers in Sweden to struggle in a similar way. The Danish workers might never have given the Swedish workers any thought, but they might still unwittingly have contributed to alleviate the suffering of the Swedish workers. In this case, I do not think anyone would claim that the Danish workers are in solidarity with the Swedish workers.

So in the table above I think only 1) (positive intention, positive effect), 2), and 3) constitute (extensions of) solidarity. Even though in 4) and 7) my actions also helps to alleviate the suffering of others, this cannot be called solidarity as I did not intend this effect. The absurdity of calling this solidarity is illustrated by 7) where the paradox of solidarity is reversed as my intentions to hurt the other for some reason actually end up reducing their suffering.

The paradox of solidarity on the other hand depends on the actual effects. It only concerns instances where my actions actually end up causing others harm. As we saw in Chapter 1, the purpose of solidarity is to produce the effect of alleviating suffering. When solidarity ends up producing the opposite effect, it becomes paradoxical. It is true of course that 7) is also paradoxical but this is the opposite paradox, what we might call "the paradox of enmity." Because this paradox has positive consequences in reducing suffering it is less cause for concern. In contrast, 3), 6), and 9) all involve greater suffering for outsiders. In 8), the paradox is latent but not actualized as the intention to cause suffering does not succeed.

Regarding 4) and 5) we may say that solidarity is *limited* but not paradoxical. We may wish that solidarity would be extended to include outsiders but it is not itself a cause of suffering. These may be cases where solidarity makes us blind to other forms of suffering, because it restricts our concern to those who are part of the solidary group. For example, Durkheim's organic solidarity is limited to those who take part in the scheme of functionally differentiated cooperation. Similarly, class solidarity is limited to those who are part of the same class.

This means that what I call the paradox of solidarity applies to 3), 6), and 9). Out of those three, situation 3) where positive intentions lead to negative effects is perhaps the hardest to do something about as an attitude of care towards the other is already in place. Because of the complexity of the social world, it is impossible to wholly predict in advance which outcomes are actions will have. The best way to avoid 3) then, seems to be to keep an eye out for any unintended consequences that our actions may have.

Regarding 6), where neutral intentions lead to negative effects, it seems plausible that the best way to avoid the negative consequences would be to change the attitude from one of indifference to one of care for the other. I explore both how our notions of solidarity can cause others to suffer despite us being disinterested in them and how to work on our attitude towards others to make it more positive in detail in chapter 3.

This leaves us with situation 9) where the intention to hurt others actually cause them to suffer. I think this case gives us the clearest picture of the paradox and I will therefore allow myself to set aside situations 3) and 6) and dedicate the rest of this chapter to examining 9) in detail.

2.2 The economy of suffering

Recall that the ancient meaning of solidarity concerned collective responsibility for debt. In the previous chapter, I argued that modernity introduced a debt of its own in the form of different modes of suffering associated with individualization. To see how Nietzsche can help us better understand the paradox of solidarity it is helpful to start by noting that he, too, was concerned with the question of debt. In his *Genealogy of Morals*, Nietzsche makes the fascinating observation that the (Christian) moral notion of guilt ("Schuld") has its origins in the term for debt ("Schulden") (Nietzsche 1956: 194). According to Nietzsche, it was "in the sphere of contracts and legal obligations that the moral universe of guilt, conscience, and duty (…) took its inception" (Nietzsche 1956: 197). Nietzsche explains this association of guilt with debt by arguing that historically, a logic of affectual compensation arose between creditors and debtors. The creditor could receive pleasure by seeing and even causing the debtor to suffer: "to behold suffering gives pleasure, but to cause another to suffer affords an even greater pleasure" (Nietzsche 1956: 198). Instead of receiving material compensation, a creditor could receive compensation in the form of the pleasure of seeing the debtor suffer. As Nietzsche puts it, "in what sense could pain constitute repayment of a debt? In the sense that to make someone suffer was a supreme pleasure" (Nietzsche 1956: 197). In this way a debt could be paid in the currency of suffering rather than material goods: "an equivalence is provided by the creditor's receiving, in place of material compensation such as money, land, or other possessions, a kind of *pleasure*" (Nietzsche 1956: 196, italics in original).

What is crucial for our purposes is the idea that suffering can be transferred. Nietzsche effectively describes what we might call "an economy of suffering." The economy of suffering is a system in which suffering is distributed, circulated, and produced. The fundamental premise of this system is that it is possible to "transfer" suffering to others by causing them to suffer. We can of course only speak of a "transfer" insofar as suffering in oneself is reduced and this is precisely what Nietzsche argues: causing suffering in others can relieve our own suffering because we take pleasure in watching them suffer.

In the previous chapter, we saw that the debt of modernity in the form of suffering caused by individualization could be paid via forms of solidity. Here we shall consider the idea that sometimes

solidity pays the debt by *transferring* it. Or to put it differently, that sometimes the solidity that alleviates suffering for some creates new suffering for others. In order to do this, we need to consider the way in which we respond to suffering itself enters the economy of suffering.

2.3 The meaning of suffering

As mentioned in the previous chapter, suffering is nothing new. Even if the ways in which human beings suffer have changed over time, suffering can reasonably be characterized as a fundamental human condition. Moreover, throughout recorded history human beings have tried to find meaning in their suffering. The search for meaning in suffering seems to be part of a more general human proclivity to search for meaning in a seemingly meaningless world. Nietzsche might have been overstating the case, when he said that "what makes people rebel against suffering is not really suffering itself but the *senselessness* of suffering" (Nietzsche 1956: 200, my emphasis). But he was right to point out that there is a kind of second-order suffering associated with the *meaninglessness* of suffering. I call it second-order suffering because it is a suffering that stems from the failure to find meaning in an already existing suffering. For example, an American mother whose son dies while serving as a soldier in the war in Afghanistan experiences suffering of the first order in the grief resulting from the loss of her son. If the soldier's death served to protect the homeland, the mother may find some comfort in the greater purpose for which he died. In contrast, her grief may be perpetuated if it turns out that the war did no good whatsoever. If the war turns out to have been pointless, her son's death will appear equally so and the meaninglessness of his death may become a source of suffering of its own.

The search for a meaning in suffering is fundamental to what has been called the first problem of evil. As William Connolly explains, "traditionally, the first problem of evil is the question of how a benevolent, omnipotent God could allow intense suffering in the world" (Connolly 1991: xv). The problem is, however, not unique to religion. Abstracting from the religious origins of the question, the first problem of evil is why we human beings must live in a world of evil. In short, why must we suffer? Building on Nietzsche, Connolly has argued that our attempts to make sense of suffering has developed into a search for someone to hold responsible: "we suffer from the problem of our meaning, and we demand that meaning must be given to existential suffering (…) We give meaning to existential suffering (…) by holding ourselves responsible for it" (Connolly 1991: 79). The question of the meaning of our suffering is answered by identifying an agent responsible for it.

Connolly observes that there is a prevalent assumption in our culture that "for every evil there must be a responsible agent who deserves to be punished and that for every quotient of evil in the world there

must be a corollary quotient of assignable responsibility. No evil without responsibility. No responsibility without reward or punishment according to desert" (Connolly 1991: 78). In other words, in the economy of suffering the market always "clears:" when people suffer without having someone to blame, they experience a second-order suffering associated with the meaninglessness of their first-order suffering. In order to purge themselves of this second-order suffering they demand that someone be held responsible. In this way a surplus of suffering tends to create a demand for responsibility. As a result the market of suffering and responsibility again moves towards equilibrium.

2.4 The second problem of evil

In this way, the question of responsibility enters into the economy of suffering: by appointing an agent responsible for suffering we relieve ourselves of the second-order suffering that comes from the meaninglessness of first-order suffering. But the alleviation of suffering that stems from settling the question of responsibility is not agent-neutral. If I take the responsibility for my suffering upon myself, the relief of finding a meaning in suffering may be purchased only at the price of suffering from the burden of responsibility. Instead of suffering from meaninglessness I may come to suffer from knowing that I only have myself to blame for my suffering. If on the other hand, I place blame on someone else, I can maintain my innocence. I may take pleasure in knowing that at least I am not at fault for the suffering I endure. I might even take pleasure in the fact that someone else is to blame for my suffering. And that pleasure might be heightened if those others are not only held responsible but also punished.

Nietzsche uses the concept of resentment to describe the way in which sufferers direct their suffering outwards in search of a culprit. In Nietzsche words, "the sufferer prescribes for himself the honey of revenge as a medicine for his suffering" (Nietzsche quoted in Connolly 1991: 190-191). This mechanism of transfer is even more effective when the other is not only deemed responsibility for our suffering but also punished for it (Nietzsche 1956: 263). Connolly refers to this as the second problem of evil. The second problem of evil consists in trying to keep oneself in the clear by attributing blame to others. Connolly describes it as "the proclivity to marginalize or demonize difference to sanctify the identity you confess" (Connolly 1991: xv). The second problem of evil flows from attempts to deal with suffering by blaming others: "the second problem of evil emerges out of solutions to the first one. It flows from diverse political tactics through which doubts about self-identity are posed and resolved by the constitution of an other against which that identity may define itself" (Connolly 1991: ix-x).

As an example, take again the mother whose son died serving as a soldier in the war in Afghanistan. If the mother thinks that she was in some way responsible for his death by allowing him to go to war, this thought can itself be a source of suffering for her. However, if other agents such as the Taliban or the U.S. government are deemed responsible, such suffering is avoided. To alleviate her second-order suffering, the mother may first try to convince herself that the son's death did serve some greater purpose after all, for example the security of the nation. But the thought might appear that if the security of the nation required the death of her son, it might not be so great after all. In order to salvage the greatness of the nation while still maintaining the meaningfulness of her son's death, she may look for a culprit. Someone who can be blamed for interfering with the security of the nation in such a way that her son's death was needed to maintain it.

For example, she may charge the Taliban with the responsibility for her son's death. The search for a culprit may to some extent alleviate the second-order suffering by allowing her to channel her suffering outwards. This placement of responsibility with the Taliban might further prompt an attempt at payback. The mother might come to support an intensification of the war in order to punish the Taliban for the loss of her son. This may reduce some of the mother's second-order suffering, but it will also cause more intense suffering for those who take the blow.

2.5 The paradox of solidarity

The mechanism of transfer of suffering works not only at the individual level, but also with regards to collectivities. Just as the individual sometimes tries to preserve his or her own integrity by externalizing suffering and responsibility, so there is a temptation to externalize the burden of responsibility in order to maintain the solidity of the collective. Nietzsche and Connolly's ideas about the relation between suffering and responsibility help explain why it may be easier to keep the bond of solidarity intact, if the responsibility for the individuals' suffering is placed outside of the solidary group. In the first place, knowing that "they" did it itself gives us a form of pleasure as it helps maintain my own purity. Further, the fact that "they" are deemed responsible justifies that they be punished, and as Nietzsche explains seeing others suffer may itself give us a pleasure and thus reduce our suffering.

At this point it may be objected that suffering might as well be externalized towards other human beings rather than towards animals, object, or the universe as such. Surely sometimes suffering may be directed against non-human targets (I often curse at the wind when I am biking in headwind). But there are several reasons why other human beings serve the role of scapegoat well. First of all, it was never really an option to blame God for the misery of the world: this would conflict with his omnipotent and

benevolent nature.[25] Secondly and perhaps more importantly, for someone to serve as a scapegoat of our suffering, they must themselves be capable of suffering: "it makes no sense to seek revenge against things that are indifferent to life, that can feel no pain and suffer no punishment" (Connolly 1991: 139). Only sentient beings which can be held responsible are able to partake in the economy of suffering. If the other cannot suffer, I cannot transfer my suffering to him (or more precisely, I cannot take pleasure in his suffering because there is none).

The modern concept of solidarity is premised on the assumption that human suffering is in some way, at least partially, a result of human agency. This is why the question of responsibility is crucial to solidarity. If no one can be held responsible for suffering, it is hard to see how it can be alleviated. Because the political world is inhabited by people and not principles, overcoming of suffering almost always implies fighting against political opponents. As mentioned in the introduction, to fight against *oppression* most often means to fight against concrete *oppressors*. In politics adversity and adversaries go hand in hand. For example, as discussed in the previous chapter, Marx thought that the suffering of alienation and pauperism could only be overcome through violence against the bourgeoisie. Here we see how the way in which people are held responsible for suffering can create new forms of suffering. Similarly, Durkheim's organic solidarity might imply suffering for those who are deemed parasitic or hostile to the societal organism: the unemployed might be blamed for being lazy and unproductive and foreigners might be seen as intruders disrupting the organic harmony of the social cooperative.

We have arrived at the paradox of solidarity: solidarity not only alleviates suffering but also causes it. There is an in-built temptation in the economy of suffering to externalize suffering. As mentioned earlier, this is no necessity. As Connolly explains, "it is a *temptation* rather than a necessity because it is juxtaposed to other interior elements (…) that could be drawn upon to disrupt or curtail it" (Connolly 1991: 8, italics in original). But because modern solidarity is based on the notion of responsibility, it is a temptation which is hard to fully escape. Sometimes it might be possible to alleviate suffering without appointing adversaries, but more often the appointment of others who are responsible is part of the way in which suffering is alleviated.

2.6 Conclusion: dynamic effects

It is easy to blame outsiders for the miseries of the world. To be clear they need not actually be responsible for the suffering in question; what matters is that they are appointed as such. Outsiders

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[25] As Nietzsche observes, this does not hold for the ancient Greek gods, who could in fact be blamed, precisely because they were not thought to be perfect. See Nietzsche 1956: 227-228.

make perfect scapegoats because in this way suffering can be externalized and the community can be relieved of it: "they are responsible, not us!" We can even say that when someone is cast as a scapegoat, they become outsiders even if they were previously considered part of the community. This is why hermit communities who shut themselves off from "the outside," rarely if ever succeed in eliminating "the outsider." When the harvest fails or an epidemic breaks out, the outsider often reappears from within in the search for a culprit. By blaming the outsider the community can purge itself of responsibility and thereby maintain its purity.

It is important to be clear that the economy of suffering is not a zero-sum game. The amount of suffering in circulation is in part determined by the way it is distributed. To stick with the economist lingo we might talk of "dynamic effects:" the way in which responsibility for suffering is distributed affects the total amount of suffering in circulation. Precisely because suffering is agent-specific there are incentives towards externalizing suffering even if it raises the total sum of suffering.

In this chapter I have examined one of the forms that the paradox of solidarity takes: the case where negative intentions towards outsiders result in those outsiders suffering. This focus has allowed us to study the mechanisms behind the paradox of solidarity in detail. Now that we have seen what the paradox of solidarity is, we are ready to consider how we might respond to it. Precisely because the economy of suffering is not a zero-sum game, we can respond to instances of suffering in ways that enhance or reduce suffering as a whole. In the next chapter, I consider how best to approach solidarity given its paradoxical character.

Chapter 3:
What is to be Done?

"In my lifetime I have seen Frenchmen, Italians, Russians, etc.;
thanks to Montesquieu, I even know that one can be Persian.
But as for man, I declare that I have never in my life met him."

Joseph de Maistre (1994: 53).

This chapter examines how we should work on our conceptions of solidarity in the face of its paradoxical character. It does so through extensive discussions of the work of two of the most influential philosophers of the 20th century: Richard Rorty and Hans-Georg Gadamer. Both Rorty and Gadamer took particular interest in the concept of solidarity. By putting these thinkers into conversation with each other I hope to illuminate the strengths and weaknesses of both to develop strategies for better dealing with the paradox.

Let me start by making my normative commitments clear. The way I approach the paradox of solidarity has a clear universalist undercurrent: we must recognize and respond to suffering in the most inclusive way we can. This means that we should not let a myopic focus on our own local suffering bar us from recognizing and responding to the suffering of others. It is important to note that this does not mean that we should always seek to extend solidarity as widely as possible. Such extensions may involve more intense suffering for those still left outside of the solidary circle. In other words, the universalism regards attaining as holistic a view of suffering as possible, not necessarily extending solidarity as far as possible. I will discuss what this means more in detail below.

At the same time the argument also has pluralist commitments. I do not seek a one-size fits all model of solidarity. Rather I hope to offer a general strategy for dealing with the paradox of solidarity which may inflect different conceptions of solidarity in different ways. While I think all conceptions of solidarity should try negotiate the paradox of solidarity in a way which avoids excessive externalization of suffering, they may do so in different ways. The way in which nationalists rework their notion of solidarity may be very different from how humanists proceed. I discuss how nationalists and humanists might proceed in the face of the paradox of solidarity in more detail in the final chapter.

Given these normative commitments, how should we approach solidarity? In the previous chapter we saw how solidarity involves an economy of suffering which distributes, circulates, and produces suffering among different groups. I noted how this economy of suffering includes dynamic effects meaning that the total amount of suffering in circulation is not stable but depends on how suffering is distributed. If the purpose of solidarity is to alleviate suffering as argued in Chapter 1, we are bound to ask what might be done to reduce the amount of suffering in circulation. Anyone familiar with household economics will know that there are two ways to improve a budget: either you cut costs or you increase income. Applying this insight to the economy of suffering, we can either reduce the negative externalities of suffering or we can try to extend solidarity beyond its existing limits. In this chapter, I argue that we should do both simultaneously. In other words, we should follow a double-ended strategy working on both ends of the same time.

In order to develop this strategy by first considering Rorty's ideas about solidarity. Rorty offers a good starting point for thinking about the paradox of solidarity because he shows us how solidarity can be extended beyond its existing limits. I distil Rorty's writings into four distinct but related claims about solidarity and discuss each in turn. I dedicate most of my discussion to the fourth claim which states that solidarity is based on sameness. In order to question this assumption I introduce Gadamer's ideas about tradition, prejudices, and horizons. Gadamer's philosophical hermeneutics helps us to see how extensions of solidarity may proceed on the basis of difference. It also yields important insights about how the notion of solidity underpinning a conception of solidarity may be the source of suffering for others and how we can respond to this. I conclude the chapter by elaborating the double-ended strategy I develop on the basis of my discussions of Rorty and Gadamer.

3.1 Rorty: from contingency to solidarity

Rorty notices that liberal thought, at least since the Enlightenment, has looked for an essence of human nature to serve as a ground for its political ideals. Liberalism has concerned itself with the universal question of what human beings as such are like rather than the particularistic questions of what Greeks or Frenchmen or Chinese are like (Rorty 2003: 345). Rorty thinks this is a mistake. He urges that liberals avoid a philosophical foundationalism based on the idea of a universal human nature (Rorty 1989: 52). This rejection of foundationalism is part of Rorty's broader philosophical rejection of metaphysics. According to Rorty, we should stop looking for some deep truth about who we are (Rorty 1989: 8; Rorty 2003: 345) and instead view the self as "a network of beliefs, desires, and emotions with

nothing behind it – no substrate behind the attributes" (Rorty 1990: 199). We should accept that the world is made up of contingencies and that we are socialization all the way down.[26]

To be clear, Rorty does not reject liberalism as such. What he dismisses is the idea that liberalism should be based on some characteristic common to all human beings. He asserts that we can still maintain a liberal notion of solidarity even in the absence of universalist foundations. But how so? As Rorty says "the traditional philosophical way of spelling out what we mean by 'human solidarity' is to say that there is something within each of us – our essential humanity – which resonates to the presence of this same thing in other human beings" (Rorty 1989: 189). This way of constructing solidarity is not available to Rorty as he rejects all such foundationalism. As Rorty readily concedes, "our insistence on contingency, and our consequent opposition to ideas like 'essence,' 'nature,' and 'foundation,' makes it impossible for us to retain the notion that some actions and attitudes are naturally 'inhuman'" (Rorty 1989: 189). How does Rorty understand solidarity then?

I think that Rorty's argument can be dissected into four interrelated claims concerning the relation between suffering and solidity involved in his notion of solidarity. Rorty does not himself distinguish between these claims, and sometimes he makes it sound like there is no distinction to be made; that all four claims are one and the same, or follow necessarily from each other. I shall argue that they do not. While each claim is related, they are not necessarily entailed by each other and one can subscribe to some of them while rejecting the rest. The four claims are:

1. We have to start from pre-existing solidarities

2. Solidarity is strongest when the solidary group is smaller than humanity at large

3. Solidarity is strongest when there is a constitutive outside

4. Solidarity is based on sameness

In what follows I will discuss each claim in turn endorsing some, modifying others, in order to examine how solidarity can best be extended in the light of the paradox of solidarity. I go through the first three claims rather quickly in order to get the fourth claim which I devote most of my discussion to. The fourth claim is the most interesting because it is most directly concerned with the extension of solidarity beyond its existing limits. I offer an extensive critique of Rorty's idea that solidarity is based

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[26] It is easy to read this rejection of truth as itself a claim to truth which would entail a performative contradiction. It is better (and more in line with Rorty's pragmatist commitments), however, to view the argument as a pragmatist argument about what is most productive for us, thus sidestepping the question of truth altogether.

on sameness by drawing on Gadamer's ideas about understanding and otherness. I start by considering the first claim.

Claim 1: We have to start from pre-existing solidarities

Rorty insists that instead of starting from a universal notion of what is shared by all human beings, we must start from something more limited: the contingent communities of solidarity that we already inhabit. As he puts it, "we have to work out from the networks we are, from the communities with which we presently identify" (Rorty 1990: 202). I think Rorty is right to suggest that we start from the solidarities that already exist and work from there. One need not endorse a full-blown anti-essentialism to come to this conclusion. It suffices to say that in order for political theory to be practically relevant it must start from the world as it is (without necessarily ending there). This claim does not exclude radical and far-reaching visions of solidarity, it only states that we should be able to trace such visions back to our current starting point. A further reason for starting from existing solidarities is that solidarity is a scarce resource; in our thinking about solidarity it is wise to appreciate what we already have. For these reasons, I think Rorty is right to suggest that we should start from already existing solidarities. But Rorty not only says that we have to work from where we are. He claims something stronger than that: namely, that solidarity is likely to be stronger if it is based on something more limited than humanity as such.

Claim 2: Solidarity is strongest when the solidary group is smaller than humanity at large

Rorty asserts that "our sense of solidarity is strongest when those with whom solidarity is expressed are thought of as 'one of us,' where 'us' means something smaller and more local than the human race" (Rorty 1989: 190-191; see also Rorty 1990: 197). If I am right that solidarity consists in binding individuals together, it seems reasonable to assume that solidarity is easier to achieve for a more limited number of people for at least two reasons. First, it seems more practical to bring a more limited number of people together. However, this practical aspect is probably less significant when we take into account that solidity can be achieved through imaginary means, as argued in Chapter 1. The second reason is therefore more important. It is easier to find a form of solidity among a more limited number of people because such a group is likely to have fewer disagreements. As the size of the group increases, the potential lines of conflict multiply. However, this does not entail that universal solidarity is impossible or weak, as Rorty seems to say, only that it might prove more difficult to secure modes of solidity appropriate to humanity at large.

Rorty substantiates his argument by giving the example of those people around Europe who rescued Jews from transportation to the Nazi concentration camp. He considers the motivation behind the rescuers' deeds: "did they say, about their Jewish neighbours, that they deserved to be saved because they were fellow human beings? Perhaps sometimes they did, but surely they would usually, if queried, have used more parochial terms to explain why they were taking risks to protect a given Jew – for example, that this particular Jew was a fellow Milanese, or a fellow Jutlander, or a fellow member of the same union or profession, or a fellow bocce player, or a fellow parent of small children" (Rorty 1989: 190-191). However, as Norman Geras has shown, the empirical research on the motivation of the rescuers during World War II is far from conclusive (Geras 1995: chapter 1). In almost all of the cases Geras considers, there is some element of universal solidarity at play.

Even if it was the case, that most rescuers during World War II were motivated by particularistic forms of solidarity, it does not follow that such modes of solidarity are the strongest. This would go against Rorty's own emphasis on contingency: if solidarity is wholly contingent then we cannot say a priori which forms of solidarity are the strongest. If we must start from within the networks we are (Claim 1) it seems odd to insist a priori that these networks must be particular rather than to consider whether the actually existing networks are in fact particular or universal.

We can conclude that even though there might be good contingent reasons for particularistic forms of solidarity to be better able to provide solidity than universalist forms, we cannot rule the latter out in advance. Rorty, however, does not merely say that solidarity is stronger when limited. He goes even further to suggest that the solidarity is more powerful when there is a constitutive outside against which the solidary group can define itself.

Claim 3: Solidarity is strongest when there is a constitutive outside

The idea that solidity can be strengthened by externalizing suffering to an other should be familiar from our discussions in Chapter 2. As emphasized there, the bonds of the collectivity can be solidified by using outsiders as scapegoats. Rorty expresses a similar idea: "I claim that the force of 'us' is, typically, contrastive in the sense that it contrasts with a 'they' which is also made up of human beings – the wrong sort of human beings" (Rorty 1989: 190). This claim might appear identical to the previous. However, while the two claims are likely to go hand in hand, they need not. We can imagine a solidary group smaller than humanity at large (Claim 2) without a constitutive outside (Claim 3) as for example might be the case for an isolated island community who are not even aware of the existence of other

human beings.[27] On the other hand, if the constitutive outside must be made up of other human beings, as Rorty suggests, it follows that the solidary group must be smaller than humanity at large. In other words, Claim 2 is a necessary condition of Claim 3.

For the reasons discussed in Chapter 2, Rorty is right to stress that solidarity can often be strengthened by appointing outsiders as a scapegoats. However, such appointment is likely to result in harm done to those outsiders. The universalist strain of my argument advices us against relying on such mechanism to establish and maintain solidarity. Consequently, we should work on existing forms of solidarity to reduce the extent to which they rely on such mechanism. This means that we should examine the notion of solidity on which our solidarity is based to identify potential ways in which our solidity causes others to suffer. It may be impossible to avoid externalizing suffering altogether, but we should seek to minimize it to the extent possible. I will return to this idea in the end of the chapter.

I have argued that the idea that we should start from existing solidarities (Claim 1) does not necessarily entail that solidarity is strongest when the solidary group is smaller than humanity (Claim 2) or that solidarity is strongest when the "we" is contrasted with a "they" (Claim 3). While there may be good reasons for both of the latter claims to hold, such reasons are contingent and do therefore not imply that universal solidarity is impossible. Rorty should agree with all of this as he himself seems to hold out for a universal notion of solidarity. This will become clear when we consider the fourth claim.

Claim 4: Solidarity is based on sameness

Similar to Durkheim's notion of mechanical solidarity, Rorty considers sameness as the foundation of solidarity. As he makes clear, his position entails that "feelings of solidarity are necessarily a matter of which similarities and dissimilarities strike us as salient, and that such salience is a function of a historically contingent final vocabulary" (Rorty 1989: 192). In other words, Rorty thinks solidarity must be based on sameness.[28] However, this does not entail that solidarity must remain fixed and limited only to those who share a certain characteristic. As Rorty says, "my position is *not* incompatible with

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[27] It might be objected that *in their own eyes* the islanders do in fact constitute humanity at large because they are the only humans they know. I think this objection misses the point: first of all, the islanders might not even have a concept of humanity at all. Secondly, the point of Claim 2 is that solidarity is constituted through the networks of meaning that make up the more local identities such as fellow Milanese or fellow Jutlander that Rorty identifies. We may hold that solidarity is constituted through local webs of meanings without being committed to the view that meaning is determined via a contrastive outside.

[28] Again note that this claim regarding sameness is different from the question of whether solidarity can include all human beings (Claim 2). This is clear from the fact that universalists also tend to rely on a form of sameness as the basis of their notion of solidarity: the sameness of all human beings.

urging that we try to extend our sense of 'we' to people whom we have previously thought of as 'they'" (Rorty 1989: 192, italics in original). Because similarities are contingently constructed rather than given in advance, the sameness on which solidarity is based is not inherently limited to the current members of the solidary group.

In fact, Rorty thinks that all humans share a certain characteristic: susceptibility to suffering. But this characteristic is not in itself enough to establish solidarity: "simply by being human we do not have a common bond. For all we share with all other humans is the same thing we share with all other animals – the ability to feel pain" (Rorty 1989: 177). It might be objected that this fact should lead us to extend solidarity beyond the human species. Rorty anticipates this objection but dismisses it: "one way to react to this last point is to say that our moral vocabulary should be extended to cover animals as well as people. A better way (…) is to try to isolate something that distinguishes human from animal pain" (Rorty 1989: 177). Rorty does not provide any arguments for why solidarity should not be extended to animals. Rorty is not alone in this. Most theories of solidarity fail to reflect on the human/non-human distinction that they tacitly rely on. Thereby they neglect to provide reasons why we cannot extend solidarity to other species. Unfortunately, this thesis does not fare much better on this account. I am open to the idea that solidarity can extend to non-humans but we must be careful that we maintain an idea of equality. In the absence of equality, solidarity turns into charity. This means that there may be limits to how far the concept of solidarity can stretch. However, more work is needed before we can properly assess these limits. Such work is beyond the scope of this thesis.

In any event, where Rorty differs from the foundationalist accounts of solidarity he rejects is not that human beings do not share certain traits, but that these traits are not sufficient to elicit our solidarity. The mere fact that others suffer is not sufficient for us to feel solidarity with them. But it does *enable* us to have solidarity with them. We come to have solidarity with those outside our solidary circle by coming to see them as "fellow-sufferers" (Rorty 1989: xvi). This is how Rorty thinks solidarity can be extended: "[solidarity] is created by increasing our sensitivity to the particular details of the pain and humiliation of other, unfamiliar sorts of people" (Rorty 1989: xvi). We may say that for Rorty the susceptibility to suffering is a necessary condition of solidarity it is not sufficient. Only when the suffering of others is described in such a way that we come to see them as people who suffer like us do we have solidarity with them.

Recall the argument in Chapter 1 that solidity need not be physical but can also be imagined. This is exactly what Rorty's proposed extensions of solidarity imply: "[solidarity] is to be achieved not by inquiry but by imagination, the imaginative ability to see strange people as fellow sufferers" (Rorty

1989: xvi). Rorty thinks that this can be achieved through the descriptions and redescriptions of suffering found in "genres such as ethnography, the journalist's report, the comic book, the docudrama, and, especially, the novel" (Rorty 1989: xvi).

Rorty not only thinks that such extensions of solidarity are possible; he also finds them desirable and urges that we extend solidarity as far as possible. He says that we should "keep trying to expand our sense of 'us' as far as we can" (Rorty 1989: 196; see also Rorty 2003: 347).[29] His notion of solidity, of the solidary "we," is thus meant to by an expansionary one: "the ethnocentrism of a 'we' (…) which is dedicated to enlarging itself, to creating an ever larger and more variegated *ethnos*" (Rorty 1989: 198, italics in original). His hope is to extrapolate further in the direction set by certain events in the past so that with time solidarity becomes more and more inclusive: "the inclusion of 'us' of the family in the next cave, then of the tribe across the river, then of the tribal confederation beyond the mountains, then of the unbelievers beyond the seas (and, perhaps last of all, of the menials who, all this time, have been doing our dirty work)" (Rorty 1989: 196). Darren Walhof calls this the "universal impulse" in Rorty (Walhof 2006: 573). As noted in the beginning of this chapter, I share this universal impulse to extend solidarity as far as possible. I also agree with Rorty that extensions of solidarity can take place on the basis of considering the suffering of others. However, I take issue with Rorty's idea that such extensions occur on the basis of sameness. In order to substantiate this critique I now turn to Gadamer and his ideas about understanding and otherness.

3.2 Gadamer: understanding the other

Like Rorty, Gadamer was concerned with the concept of solidarity, especially in his later writings (see in particular Gadamer 2009). In recent years there has been a surge of interest in Gadamer's thinking about solidarity (Walhof 2006; Warnke 2012). The reading I advance here differs from the existing readings in important ways. In contrast to Darren Walhof (2006), I do not consider Gadamer's later writings on solidarity as a productive starting place for thinking about the concept for a number of reasons. First of all, I agree with Georgia Warnke that "Gadamer's account of solidarity is actually somewhat thin" (Warnke 2012: 20). Gadamer does not give us very much to work with. Secondly, what he gives us seems too closely linked with the idea of civic friendship found in Ancient Greek thought (Bernstein 1983: 164). As Hauke Brunkhorst has convincingly argued, this form of solidarity inherently

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[29] This idea of a "we" whose scope can be extended (as well as contracted) also undergirds Rorty's idea of justice as "larger loyalty" (Rorty 2007).

problematic (Brunkhorst 2005: 20).[30] Finally, Gadamer thinks of solidarity as something already underlying our social relations to be uncovered rather than constructed (Walhof 2006: 572; Warnke 2012: 21). As Gadamer puts it, "we do not have to invent these solidarities; we merely have to make ourselves aware of them" (Gadamer cited in Walhof 2006: 572). I am not sure what it means to say that solidarities exist independently of our acknowledgment of them, but it seems to necessarily imply that solidarity cannot be extended at all.[31] Taken together these points make Gadamer's later writings an unpromising starting point for thinking about the modern idea of solidarity which, as argued in Chapter 1, applies to a society of strangers rather than of friends.

However, in contrast to Georgia Warnke (2012), I do not think this should lead us to drop the concept of solidarity altogether. While Warnke is surely right to stress that "we live in a world of deadly and dogmatic extremism, much of it founded on insular solidarities" (Warnke 2012: 22), it takes a strong idealist to suggest that politics should only pursue ideals which do not harbour such dangers. On the approach advances here, the fact that solidarity can be the cause of suffering does not mean that solidarity is inherently bad. It is more productive to apply Gadamer's insights with regard to tradition to the concept of solidarity itself. This is the approach I adopt here: I draw on Gadamer's earlier work, especially *Truth and Method*, to develop insights about how to negotiate the paradox of solidarity and to offer a corrective to Rorty's claim that solidarity must be based on sameness.

In his magnum opus, *Truth and Method*, Gadamer seeks to rescue the concept of tradition from the bad name given to it by Enlightenment thinkers. During the Enlightenment rationalist philosophers such as Immanuel Kant sought to displace the authority of tradition in favour of the faculty of reason. To be free meant not to rely on tradition but to think for oneself as Kant famously argued (Kant 1996). In contrast to Kant, Gadamer thinks that there is no alternative to reasoning within tradition. Any critical perspective must be from within history not from without it (Warnke 2012: 17). Gadamer bases his argument on the view that humans are linguistic beings: "language is the fundamental mode of operation of our being-in-the-world and the all-embracing form of the constitution of the world"

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[30] Walhof's restatement of Gadamer's notion of solidarity does not escape this problem. Walhof states that solidarity "functions as a mediating concept between friendship and citizenship" (Walhof 2006: 583). While Walhof is eager to make clear that solidarity and friendship cannot be equated, he still effectively limits solidarity to a group smaller than and within the confines of the state, thus overlooking the potential for international solidarity altogether.

[31] As Richard Bernstein has noted, this leads Gadamer into a version of Rousseau's paradox of politics in that the solidarity which Gadamer hopes to achieve has to be presupposed from the start (Bernstein 1983: 225).

(Gadamer 1977: 3). Gadamer thinks of language as fundamental in the way our world is constituted. Our inherited languages are not simply tools that we can use, but the way that we are constituted in the world: "language is not just one of man's possessions in the world; rather, on it depends the fact that man has a *world* at all" (Gadamer 2013: 459, italics in original). Because we inherit our languages, we cannot escape tradition (Bernstein 1983: 142; Warnke 2012: 17). This point is roughly equivalent to Rorty's assertion that we are socialization all the way down. Like Rorty, Gadamer draws the conclusion that we must start from within the networks of meaning we are (Walhof 2006: 57). However, tradition is not given once and for all: "tradition is not simply a permanent precondition; rather, we produce it ourselves inasmuch as we understand, participate in the evolution of tradition, and hence further determine it ourselves" (Gadamer 2013: 305).

For Gadamer it follow that we must embrace our prejudices (Gadamer 2013: 289). Gadamer thinks of prejudices in the literal sense of "pre-judgments," meaning the anticipations we meet the world with in order to make sense of it. As he explains, "actually 'prejudice' means a judgment that is rendered before all the elements that determine a situation have been finally examined" (Gadamer 2013: 283). Prejudices for Gadamer are necessary conditions for us to experience the world at all. This is so because understanding requires projection of a whole and such projection is precisely what a prejudice is (Vessey 2009: 533). As Gadamer notes with regards to the interpretation of texts: "a person who is trying to understand a text is always projecting. He projects a meaning for the text as a whole as soon as some initial meaning emerges in the text" (Gadamer 2013: 279). This also goes for our understanding of the world. Prejudices allow us to project meaning onto an unknown object of interpretation by making "pre-judgments" about the nature of that object.[32] As Gadamer puts it, "prejudices are biases of our openness to the world. They are simply conditions whereby we experience something – whereby what we encounter says something to us" (Gadamer 1977: 9).

It seems reasonable to assume that different conceptions of solidarity are also characterized by different constellations of prejudices. In order to bring people together to achieve solidity it is necessary to provide some kind of direction. Solidarity also relies on pre-judgments to project wholeness in order to bring the solidary group into being. For example, Marx's notion of class solidarity presupposes

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[32] In his defense of the concept of tradition against the critique of the Enlightenment, Gadamer points out that the Enlightenment also has prejudices; most importantly the (paradoxical) prejudice against prejudice: "there is one prejudice of the Enlightenment that defines its essence: the fundamental prejudice of the Enlightenment is the prejudice against prejudice itself, which denies tradition its power" (Gadamer 2013: 283).

preconceptions of a capitalist system where workers are exploited, a bourgeois class owns the means of production, and so on, in order to unite the working class. In the absence of these prejudices, it is hard to make sense of the notion of class solidarity. It is hard to see how solidarity can come into being without some notion of the collective which is hoped to emerge. Prejudices may be especially powerful with regard to solidarity because they structure our perception of what counts as suffering worthy of our care. This means that prejudices of solidarity set the scene for who we feel solidarity with and who we do not.

Gadamer distinguishes between blind and enabling prejudices: enabling prejudices are those prejudices that make understanding possible whereas blind prejudices lead us to misunderstandings (Bernstein 1983: 128). Gadamer argues that we "cannot separate in advance the productive prejudices that enable understanding from the prejudices that hinder it and lead to misunderstandings" (Gadamer 2013: 306). This means that, as Richard Bernstein has put it, "to risk and test our prejudices is a constant task (and not a final achievement)" (Bernstein 1983: 129). We may question, however, whether it is possible to separate the blind and enabling prejudices so neatly as Gadamer seeks to do. It seems more right to say that most if not all prejudices are enabling in some respects and blinding in others. In this way we avoid dividing prejudices into "good" and "bad" and instead we get a more nuanced picture. This point is important with regard to solidarity because, as we saw in Chapter 2, solidity can both alleviate and cause suffering at the same time. The same applies, I would argue, to prejudices: they can be both enabling and blinding at the same time. This explains why people have reasons for maintaining their prejudices even if they are blinding in some respects. If certain prejudices help me to sustain a sense of solidity (for example the prejudice that other members of the same nation as me will help me in case I am ever in need) I might cling on to this prejudices even if it is blinding in other respects (for example it might induce me to think that I am superior to people who are not members of my nation).

This way in which prejudices can be both enabling and blinding at the same time is actually perfectly captured by another of Gadamer's central ideas: the concept of a "horizon." Building on the phenomenological tradition of thinkers such as Edmund Husserl and Martin Heidegger,[33] Gadamer invokes the notion of a horizon to denote the way in which our vision is always both temporally and spatially situated. As Gadamer explains: "the horizon is the range of vision that includes everything that can be seen from a particular vantage point. Applying this to the thinking mind, we speak of

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[33] For a discussion of how Gadamer's notion of horizon draws on earlier work in the phenomenological tradition, see Vessey 2009.

narrowness of horizon, of the possible expansion of horizon, of the opening up of new horizons, and so forth" (Gadamer 2013: 313).

It might be objected that the notion of a horizon imprisons our understanding within a set of cognitive confines from which it can never escape. However, such objection fails to consider that horizons are far from static. As Gadamer says, "the horizon is (…) something into which we move and that moves with us. Horizons change for a person who is moving" (Gadamer 2013: 315). We can move closer to have a more detailed look at something or we can seek a higher vantage point to gain a wider and more expansive view (Vessey 2009: 533; Warnke 2012: 14). The limits of our horizons are not given but can be both enlarged and contracted.

Gadamer thinks we should seek to expand our horizon to achieve a more holistic and thus better understanding: "to acquire a horizon means that one learns to look beyond what is close at hand – not in order to look away from it but to see it better, within a larger whole and in *truer* proportion" (Gadamer 2013: 316, my emphasis). The risk of a narrow horizon is that we put too much emphasis on what is near to us. As Gadamer says, "a person who has no horizon does not see far enough and hence over-values what is nearest to him. On the other hand, 'to have horizon' means not being limited to what is nearby but being able to see beyond it" (Gadamer 2013: 313).

While Gadamer does explicitly not relate this point to the construction of solidarity, I think the concept of a horizon helps illuminate what we should strive for in relation to the paradox of solidarity. To have a broad horizon means to keep in sight not only those forms of suffering that are close to oneself, but to open one's vision to the suffering of distant others. In other words, by achieving a wider horizon we may attain a more holistic picture of suffering rather than focus narrowly on our own suffering or the suffering of those close to us. Again this is the universalist impulse which I embrace: we should aim to expand our horizons to get as broad a view of suffering as possible. However, this does not mean that we should not seek to attain a bird-eyes-view, the view of God, or a view from nowhere. With Gadamer we may say that the way to expand solidarity is not to rid ourselves of our prejudices - that would preclude solidarity altogether. Such attempts would overlook the preclude solidarity altogether because they would leave us without anything to structure our notion of solidity. Instead we should acknowledge that our field of vision is located in time and space and that to expand our horizon we must work from where we are. This means that we should shape our prejudices in ways that open us to the suffering of people we do not yet care for.

Gadamer emphasizes the way such expansions of our horizons take place through engagements with other people who have a different horizon than ourselves. Gadamer refers to this process of coming to understanding through dialogue as a "fusion of horizons." Our horizons are fundamentally open to the influence of other horizons (Bernstein 1983: 143).[34] This holds both at the individual as well as the collective level: "just as the individual is never simply an individual because he is always in understanding with others, so too the closed horizon that is supposed to enclose a culture is an abstraction" (Gadamer 2013: 315). It follows from this that the solidary group is not an air-tight container. While extensions of solidarity may be difficult they are never impossible.[35]

As we saw above, Rorty agrees that solidarity has no fixed boundaries.[36] Rorty thinks solidarity should be extended via redescriptions that make the other appear as like us in a salient way. We may come to see ourselves as suffering in similar ways to others and that serves as the basis of solidarity. For Gadamer on the other hand, understanding always means to understand differently (Bernstein 1983: 139). Understanding always involves going beyond the current limits of one's horizon. As Gadamer says, "hermeneutic work is based on a polarity of familiarity and strangeness" and "the true locus of hermeneutics is this in-between" (Gadamer 2013: 306). In other words, understanding moves back and forth between the known and unknown in order to expand one's horizon, not in order to confirm sameness.

This is where I think Rorty goes wrong: when we open ourselves to the suffering of others we do not do so in order to confirm that they suffer in the same way as us. Rather we try to understand the

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[34] It might be objected that if horizons are open it does not mean to speak of distinct horizons but only of one big horizon. David Vessey answers that objection in a convincing manner: "[Gadamer's] answer is that speaking of *one* horizon, although correct, underplays the tension that arises between divergent background beliefs that shape interpretations of the subject matter and that form the conditions for disagreement" (Vessey 2009: 541). In other words, while horizons are not closed off from each other, it still makes sense to speak of distinct horizons to emphasize the heterogeneity of horizons.

[35] Thus I disagree with Warnke when she says that "traditions include the potential for expansion whereas solidarities react to external forces" (Warnke 2012: 21). It is simply wrong to claim that solidarity is inherently reactionary and cannot be expanded. Again Warnke is right to say that "communities of solidarity can be dogmatic and stubborn" (Warnke 2012: 21), but they also alleviate suffering and help people flourish.

[36] Rorty agrees with Gadamer that cultures have no strict boundaries. Rorty says that "alternative cultures are not to be thought of on the model of alternative geometries. Alternative geometries are irreconcilable because they have axiomatic structures, and contradictory axioms" and further that "the distinction between different cultures does not differ in kind from the distinction between different theories held by members of a single culture" (Rorty 2003: 350).

specific character of their suffering. Surely we do so by the light of our existing prejudices (as all understanding proceeds in this way), but this does not mean that we must end up the same place we started. The process is better conceived as a dynamic one where our understanding of the way in which the other suffers causes us to change the prejudices that sustain our solidity.

With time we may come to see the other as like us but such sameness is ex post rather than ex ante. When Rorty invokes the example of rescuers during World War II, he focuses on *existing* solidarities (on Rorty's account the Jews are already seen as fellow Jutlanders or Milanese) rather than extensions of solidarity. The force of Rorty's argument rests on the way in which he isolates the moment of the rescue from the process of solidarity-building over time. By focusing on an insulated moment in time, he makes it appear as if the identities of the rescuers and the rescued were set in stone. But the process by which Jews came to be understood as fellow-Danes was a long one.

Rorty is right to say that there is certain sameness in the solidary group – but it is the trivial circular sameness of all belonging to that group. We may come to share with others the prejudices that structure our shared notion of solidarity without sharing any other salient similarities with them. And those prejudices may change as the group extends its solidarity. Therefore, Rorty's focus on sameness makes the process of extending solidarity unduly inhibited. We constrain our understanding of the other unnecessarily if we only look for similarities. Instead we should open ourselves to understand the other without attempting to figure out in which way they might be like us. Thereby, we also leave more room for ourselves to change in the process.

It may be that Rorty is right to say that solidarity based on sameness is stronger, but this does not mean that solidarity must necessarily rely on sameness. I can show care for the suffering of the other without claiming to fully know that suffering or think of him as a fellow-sufferer. As Warnke puts it, on the Gadamerian view, "what is crucial (…) is not that we recognize others as like us but that we recognize them at all" (Warnke 2012: 11). We may conclude from this that conceptions of solidarity need not remain fixed but can open themselves to consider the suffering of those outside the solidary group and that the underlying notion of solidity might change as a consequence. Something like this happened during the 20th century when socialist parties in Europe changed their notion of solidity from being based on the concept of class to the notion of "the people." In discuss this development in more detail in the final chapter.

However, some may still question whether Gadamer's grants enough agency to the other. In a well-known encounter between Jacques Derrida and Gadamer at the Goethe Institute in Paris in 1981, Derrida accused Gadamer of being caught up in a "metaphysics of the will" (Derrida 1989: 53). John D. Caputo, a self-avowed Derridean, subsequently elaborated the critique, arguing that Gadamer's hermeneutics is purchased at the expense of a "deep violence" which represses what "disturbs its unity" (Caputo 1989: 263). In Darren Walhof's succinct restatement of the Derridean critique, the concept of a fusion of horizons "masks a will to power that treats the other as a mere instrument for my understanding, thereby denying the otherness of the other" (Walhof 2006: 579).[37]

Gadamer was himself very much aware of this risk (Dallmayr 1993; 2009: 27). As he remarked, "here constantly arises the danger of 'appropriating' the other person in one's own understanding and thereby failing to recognize his or her otherness" (Gadamer 2013: 310, footnote 46). If we assume to know the other person's horizon in advance, we are not engaging in understanding at all. As Gadamer puts it, "the claim to understand the other person in advance functions to keep the other person's claim at a distance" (Gadamer 2013: 368). However, Gadamer cautions against simply leaving the other be. The way to deal with the problem is rather to engage with the other in an open-minded way: "the important thing is to be aware of one's own bias" (Gadamer 2013: 282).[38] While we may never reach a full understanding, such efforts are not wholly futile either.[39]

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[37] To be clear, Walhof does not himself share this critique.

[38] The difference between Gadamer's emphasis on understanding and Derrida's focus on misunderstanding is made readily clear by Gadamer's initial response to Derrida's critique: "Mr. Derrida's questions prove irrefutably that my remarks on text and interpretation, to the extent they had Derrida's well-known position in mind, did not accomplish their objective. I am finding it difficult to understand these questions that have been addressed to me. But I will make an effort, as anyone would do who wants to understand another person or be understood by the other" (Gadamer 1989: 55). Gadamer goes on to suggest that Derrida, in fact, took pleasure in the misunderstanding because it confirmed Derrida's philosophical project: "is he really disappointed that we cannot understand each other? Indeed not, for in his view this would be a relapse into metaphysics. He will, in fact, be pleased, because he takes this private experience of disillusionment to confirm his own metaphysics" (Gadamer 1989: 56).

[39] On this point I agree with Walhof when he says that "the appeal of this Gadamerian approach is that it gives us a way of conceptualizing solidarity and otherness without either making the other same or leaving the other completely other. Too often, the other is presented as wholly alien, something out of our experience whose appearance shocks, disrupts, and confuses" (Walhof 2006: 588).

It may also be objected that understanding does not entail care for the suffering of others: I may try to understand the other only so I can better manipulate him or her to my own advantage. In such situation an understanding of the other would clearly not constitute solidarity with the other, but might on the contrary cause that person to suffer (even more). I think this is clearly a valid point, but I do not see any other alternatives than trying to open ourselves to understand the suffering of others hoping that such understanding will elicit a care for the suffering of others. Understanding the other better might lead to solidarity and it might not. It surely is not perfect but as far as I can see it is simply the best strategy available to us.

During their encounter, Derrida also raises the pertinent question of whether the enlargement of a horizon takes place as "a continual expansion, or a discontinuous re-structuring" (Derrida 1989: 53). I think Derrida underplays the extent to which the fusion of horizons already involve a restructuring of the horizon. However, even if the fusion of horizon is by no means smooth, Derrida's critique forces us to consider whether it would be more productive to build solidarity through a radical break with existing modes of solidarity. I grant that sometimes a radical breach or rupture might be the best way forward. However, more often than not I think such a break would undermine the very solidity that solidarity seeks to secure. Sometimes solidity must be undermined to make way for another forms of solidity, but such undertaking must always be cautious not to do more damage than good.

3.3 Working from within the paradox: a double-ended strategy

We are now ready to see how the insights of Rorty and Gadamer can be brought to bear on the question of how to extend solidarity in the light of the paradox of solidarity. Rorty and Gadamer's shared emphasis on how human beings are always situated within historically contingent context, provides a good reason to start solidarity building from already existing solidarities. This does not necessarily entail that solidarity must be confined to a group of individuals smaller than humanity at large (Rorty's Claim 2) or that the solidary group must define its notion of solidity against a constitutive outside (Rorty's Claim 3). The latter claim is especially problematic from the perspective advanced here because solidity is purchased at the price of the other's suffering.

As discussed in the beginning of this chapter, I think our concern for suffering should extend as broadly as possible. It follows that we should examine and if necessary work to reconfigure the notion of solidity underpinning our conception of solidarity. As Gadamer reminds us, we must be aware of our biases. This means that we must work on the prejudices structuring our notion of solidity as open as possible to accepting outsiders into the solidary group. In other words, we must reduce, if we can,

the extent to which our notion of solidarity is *limited*. Furthermore, we must work to make ourselves aware of the ways in which our notion of solidity is implicated necessitates the suffering of others, for example by holding them responsible for our suffering. While blaming outsiders for our suffering may sometimes be necessary to alleviate it, we must do our best to see if that is really the case or if there are others ways to go. In other words, we must limit the extent to which our notion of solidarity is *paradoxical* (see Chapter 2).

This does not mean, however, that we should seek to overcome the paradox. Attempts to escape the paradox are likely to worsen it (Connolly 1991: x). It is better to accept the paradox and work from within it to minimize its excesses where possible. It is worth noting that conflicts between different notions of solidarity may be internal to the same person. Our minds often harbour conflicting voices and we may feel drawn to several forms of solidarity simultaneously. As a result allegiance to different notions of solidarity may be overlapping rather than mutually exclusive. This multitude of voices may pull in different directions creating internal unrest. In order to deal with such psychological unease, it may be tempting to seek to overcome the paradox by silencing all but one voice and insisting that only the suffering of those individuals picked out by that voice matters.

We must attempt to resist this temptation. Instead we should try to inhabit the paradox as best as we can. We may have to make compromises not only with others but also with ourselves. We must learn to live in the excluded middle between care for "us" and care for "them" and transform that space from within. In order to elucidate how we might do so, I have devoted most of my discussion to the question of how to extend solidarity beyond its existing boundaries. I think Rorty is right to say that "we should stay on the lookout for marginalized people – people whom we still instinctively think of as 'they' rather than 'us'" (Rorty 1989: 196). However, I disagree with him when he suggests that this entails that "we should try to notice our similarities with them" (Rorty 1989: 196). I have tried to show with Gadamer that we can have solidarity with someone without considering them like us in any salient way (with the notable exception that *after the fact* we are alike in being part of the same solidary group).

It is important to stress that we should always keep an eye out that extensions of solidarity to some do not come at the price of intensified suffering in others. In other words, we should always be conscious of how the paradox might reappear in a different guise. This means that sometimes the best way forward is to refrain from extending solidarity further, because such extensions might create a backlash.

What I am suggesting then, is that we respond to the paradox of solidarity by working on each end of the paradox. With regards to *solidity*, we must examine the prejudices that structure it to make it as inclusive as possible and to ensure that we minimalize externalization of suffering to the greatest extent possible. This means that we should be open to the possibility that our conception of solidity might change and our idea of solidarity might develop as a consequence.

With regards *suffering*, we must open ourselves to the suffering of others and the possibility that they may suffer differently than ourselves. As Rorty rightly says, "such increased sensitivity makes it more difficult to marginalize people different from ourselves by thinking, 'They do not feel it as *we* would,' or 'There must always be suffering, so why not let *them* suffer?'" (Rorty 1989: xvi). That is we should open our horizons to new and unknown forms of suffering to the greatest extent possible. We should be open to the possibility that suffering can take many forms and shapes and what looks like justice to some might be painful to others. By opening ourselves up to the suffering of others, we may become more attentive to it even if it initially does not look like our own suffering, or suffering at all for that matter.

It is important to note that the work we do on one end of the paradox has effects at the other end as well. The work we do to the prejudices that structure our notion of solidity affects our horizons and thus the kinds of suffering that we are able to identify (with). For example, by adopting a more inclusive notion of the nation, nationalists may become more attuned to forms of suffering which presuppose a different cultural horizon than their own. They may never fully understand the pain of the other, but they may become open to the idea that the modes of suffering they are familiar with are not the only ones that matter.

Similarly, engagements with the suffering of outsiders may change our notion of solidity. As Rorty says, the "process of coming to see other human beings as 'one of us' rather than as 'them' is a matter of detailed description of what unfamiliar people are like and of *redescription of what we ourselves are like*" (Rorty 1989: xvi, my emphasis). For example, a nationalist may come to see that his notion of nationhood is predicated on violence against those who do not live up to its criteria for inclusion. As a consequence, he may try to rework his notion of nationhood to become less chauvinistic.

As mentioned in the beginning of the chapter, this dual-track strategy may inflect different conceptions of solidarity in different ways. In the final chapter I consider how it might affect solidarity-building in late modernity.

Chapter 4:
Between the Nation and the World:
The Paradoxical Terrain of Late Modernity

> "When a good man and a good woman
> Can't find the good in each other
> Then a good man and a good woman
> Will bring out the worst in the other
> The bad in each other."
>
> Feist (2011).

In this concluding chapter, I will show how the discussions of the previous chapters can be brought to bear on the problems of solidarity facing us in this late modern era. The chapter consists of three parts: how we got here, where we are, and where we might go in the future. I start by providing a history of how paradox of solidarity was negotiated and renegotiated during the 20th century. I focus especially on how Leftist movements managed to institutionalize a form of solidarity in the modern welfare state. I then go on to consider where these developments leave us today. I do so by considering a number of paradoxes which make up the political terrain of late modernity. These paradoxes concern the late modern phenomena of individualization, neoliberalism, globalization, and nationalism. Taken together these paradoxes make up an ambiguous landscape which harbours both threats against solidarity and potentials for new forms of solidarity to emerge. Finally, I conclude by providing some thoughts on where we should go from here. I consider how the double-ended strategy developed in Chapter 3 could potentially inflect two of the most dominant forms of solidarity in today's political landscape: nationalism and humanism. I conclude that both nationalism and humanism must seek to rework their notions of solidity to open themselves to productive transformations but not so much that solidity evaporates altogether. The hope is that the two might come to reflect and amplify the good in each other so that their interactions may produce more rather than less solidarity. I start by examining how the concept of solidarity developed during the 20th century as Leftist movements gained political power.

4.1 A Short History of Solidarity[40]

Historically the concept of solidarity has most often been associated with Leftist political movements.[41] Solidarity has always been an important mobilizing force in Leftist political struggle, but it acquired an especially important role when Leftist political movements gained enough power to influence state policies. In the middle of the 20th century, Leftist movements succeeded in building what today stands as the hitherto greatest institutional manifestation of solidarity in history: the modern welfare state. While the welfare state is one of the Left's greatest political achievements, it also harbours problems reflecting the paradoxical nature of solidarity. These problems become evident when we look at how Leftist ideas about solidarity changed during the construction of the welfare state.

Initially, most Leftist parties followed Marxist ideology (more or less strictly). As we saw in Chapter 1, Marx thought of solidarity as a weapon in the working class' struggle against the capitalist class and at the same time as an end-state which would be reached once capitalism was overturned and replaced with communism. The boundaries of class solidarity were organized so that solidarity was restricted to the working class (particularism) but extended world-wide (universalism). Class solidarity was not only limited but also paradoxical as it implied the destruction of the bourgeois class.

So long as Leftist parties subscribed to Marx's theory of capitalism, this negotiation of the paradox did not appear problematic. However, with time some grew impatient waiting for the proletarian revolution that Marx had prophesied. In contradiction to Marx's prediction, the working class had not deteriorated but actually achieved substantial material gains. By the middle of the 20th century, the vast majority of the working class had much more to lose than their chains. Furthermore, reformation of democratic election systems meant that the Left was presented with more strategic opportunities to pursue than the strict 'either-or' of revolutionary politics (*either* you overturn the system *or* resign yourself to its

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[40] I rely on Stjernø 2005 for this reading of how the concept of solidarity has developed in the 20th century.
[41] Contemporary Christian social teaching also gives a prominent place to the concept of solidarity. While solidarity has been invoked by both Protestants and Catholics, it has been much more prominent in Catholicism. This is probably not surprising given Protestantism's more individualist orientation compared to Catholicism's emphasis on social order and integration. However, solidarity was incorporated into the Catholic vocabulary much later than in Socialist rhetoric, partly as a result of how solidarity was traditionally associated with class struggle. The concept was not introduced into a papal encyclical until 1961 in Pope John XXIII's *Mater et Magistra* and it was only in the papacy of Pope John Paul II, that solidarity became a dominant theme in Catholic social teaching (Stjernø 2005: 67, 70). Pope John Paul II's focus on solidarity might have been enhanced by his association with Lech Walesa and the Solidarnosc movement (literally "solidarity"). In any event, while solidarity has since played an important role in Catholic social teachings in the 20th century, it is still mainly associated with Leftist politics.

imperatives). This meant that there were good strategic reasons to extend solidarity beyond the working class to include artisans, farmers, fishermen, small merchants, and others. However, the reasons for the expansion were not only strategic. Since the French Revolution the people imagined as a singular and universal subject has become widely recognized as a source of legitimacy. The way in which the people is imagined as singular and universal implies that all its members are free and equal. Given that the values of freedom and equality were central to Leftist movements it is not hard to see why the notion of the people was attractive. If the working class was incorporated into the people, workers could claim that as part of the people they were to be treated equal to other members of the people.

Simultaneously with this expansion, the reach of solidarity was also gradually contracted in a different respect. While initially solidarity was extended across international borders to all the workers of the world, with time the horizon of solidarity was in many respects narrowed to the national arena. International solidarity was still a practical political possibility as evidenced in the creation of development aid programs for Third World countries by many social democracies in the 1950s and 1960s, but the nation increasingly became the main reference point of solidarity. We thus see how the inherent tension in the socialist conception of solidarity between universalism and particularism was reconfigured in the course of the 20th century from solidarity between workers of all countries to the solidarity of the people of a particular country.[42] This was both an expansion and contraction at the same time: the bounds of solidarity were expanded from the working class to include the whole of the people and at the same time contracted from the international - the "workers of all countries" - to the national.

During periods of high growth rates in the 1950s and 1960s it was possible to yield material improvements for all classes without overthrowing the capitalist system and to put a damper on

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[42] It is interesting to note that the process whereby solidarity became aligned with the national people took place in very different tempi in different socialist and social democratic parties: earliest in Scandinavia, somewhat later in Germany, and at the latest in Southern European countries (including France) with stronger communist parties who adhered more strictly to the classical Marxist analysis stressing the antagonism between workers and capitalists. The change ranged from Norway which broadened its concept of solidarity to include the people as a whole rather than just the working class as early as 1909 (in the program of the Norwegian Labour Party from that year) to the Spanish Socialist Workers' Party (PSOE) which did not include other groups than the working class in its political program until 1982. Part of this resistance was of course due to the fact that communism had a stronger foothold in Southern European countries and therefore these countries were less prone to soften their militant attitude towards "enemies" of the working class. For a detailed account of when different social democratic parties adopted solidarity as a core component of their political programs, see Stjernø 2005: Chapter 4.

conflicts over the distribution of material goods. This helped create and maintain national unity as conflicts over distribution of material goods could to some extent be pushed to the side. As material prosperity took priority over class struggle a productivist logic of solidarity developed: "solidarity should also imply *solidaristic effort* to achieve prosperity, meaning *working* and not struggling together against a common adversary" (Stjernø 2005: 107, italics in original). This logic is more or less identical to Durkheim's notion of organic solidarity: functionally differentiated yet interdependent parts of the organism working together to the benefit of the common good.

We can say then that the development from class solidarity to a productivist solidarity based on the notion of the people roughly corresponds to a shift from Marx's idea of class solidarity to Durkheim's notion of organic solidarity. Drawing this parallel helps us see the tensions produced by this transformation. As we saw in Chapter 1, Marx and Durkheim's respective theories of solidarity are in conflict with each other. The transition to a Durkheimian notion of solidarity actualized this conflict as Leftist parties were caught between their commitments to the working class and their adoption of the people as the central locus of solidarity.

On the one hand, because the legitimacy of the people is based on singularity and universality, the working class had to be completely dissolved into the people for the underlying logic of legitimacy to be intact. If the people was divided into the different classes, it would no longer be singular and universal. Therefore, in order for workers to be considered members of society on equal footing with others, class ties had to be dissolved. However, on the other hand, if the working class was completely dissolved, inequalities relating to class might go unnoticed. Class solidarity was structured around a set of prejudices which made it possible to perceive the forms of suffering tied to class divisions. The prejudices which structure the solidarity of the people makes such suffering less visible. While this tension between the solidarity of the working class and the solidarity of the people still exists in Leftist politics today, it is clear that the latter won the day. During the 20th century national solidarity became the hegemonic form of solidarity across the political spectrum.

However, this did not mean that the paradox was solved. To some it might seem like the so-called "universal" welfare states of Scandinavia had found a way to extend solidarity to everyone through the inclusive notion of "the people." But if particularism was less evident it was not because difference had ceased to exist, but rather because it was pushed out of sight. Instead of other classes, the outsiders were now those outside the bounds of the nation. The tension between particularism and universalism

was not resolved but renegotiated so that welfare benefits were extended to all members of the state (universalism), but only to members of the state (particularism).[43]

This negotiation of the paradox allowed solidarity to take hold in the institutions of the welfare state for a while, but it would soon be unsettled again. While high growth rates during the 1950s and 1960s had temporarily allowed the paradox of solidarity to be paved over, conflicts soon re-emerged to undermine the productivist logic of solidarity. During the 1970s and 1980s, developments in the global economy undermined the premises of welfare state solidarity as economic growth declined and unemployment rates rose. Conflicts over distribution could no longer be avoided by giving everyone more than they had before and the question of blame and responsibility came to the fore once again. Furthermore, globalization of information was beginning to accelerate, meaning that the problems inherent in the welfare state model of solidarity were becoming more evident: if otherness had somewhat successfully been pushed out of sight, globalization brought it back in full view. Information technologies made stories and images of wars, famines, and epidemics in other parts of the world more readily accessible and it became harder to look the other way (Beck 2000: 91-92). As a result, the constellation of particularism and universalism underlying the welfare state model of solidarity became increasingly difficult to sustain.

4.2 The paradox of individualization

It has become difficult, however, to find new common ground on which to build solidarity. In contrast to John Donne's famous proclamation in 1624 that "no man is an island," it now seems that every man is becoming an island; isolated and separated from others by uneasy waters of uncertainty. Common ground is becoming increasingly uncommon. According to sociologists we are becoming more and more individualized (Bauman 2000; Beck & Beck-Gernsheim 2002). However, the problem is not individualization as such. As argued in Chapter 1, modernity was always marked by individualization. Individualization creates conditions of freedom as it liberates people from the kinds of domination associated with strong forms of collectivism and gives them the chance to seek out their own conceptions of the good life. However, as we saw in Chapter 1, this freedom comes at the price of new forms of suffering such as alienation, pauperism, egoism, and anomie. This is the paradox of individualization: while it yields more freedom it also creates more suffering.

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[43] The development was far from linear and homogenous, as anti-colonial struggles in the third world became another cause for solidarity in the 1950s and 1960s, but in terms of political practice, "the people" (conceived in national terms) became the central reference point of solidarity.

Solidarity responds to this paradox as it seeks to alleviate these forms of suffering via forms of solidity. However, this does not mean that we are taken back to a Gemeinschaft-like society where individualization is no longer at play. Solidarity always presupposes individualization. Even though the individuals are bound together they are still individuals. In a nutshell, solidarity does not overcome individualization but helps make up for its harms. The problem with individualization today then is not the phenomenon itself but the way it is dealt with. Today the dominant response to individualization is the neoliberal insistence that suffering is to be dealt with individually: each island has its own problems which it has to confront by itself as best as it can.

4.3 The paradox of neoliberalism

Neoliberalism came to prominence with the economic policies associated with Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan. During the 1980s Thatcher and Reagan both took great efforts to deregulate the economy, diminish the power of trade unions, and privatize hitherto public state-owned companies. In 1987, Thatcher gave a famous interview with the magazine *Woman's Own* following Thatcher's third electoral victory. In this interview, Thatcher lamented those who blamed society for their miseries: "I think we have gone through a period when too many children and people have been given to understand 'I have a problem, it is the Government's job to cope with it!' or 'I have a problem, I will go and get a grant to cope with it!' 'I am homeless, the Government must house me!' and so they are casting their problems on society and who is society? There is no such thing! There are individual men and women and there are families and no government can do anything except through people and people look to themselves first" (Thatcher 1987). Thatcher's assertion that "there is no such thing as society" was in fact a political project disguised as a statement of fact: existing structures had to be broken up so that individuals would take responsibility for their own lives. As we saw in Chapter 2, the question of responsible is central to the economy of suffering. Thatcher's project was to create an economy of suffering free of collective actors. If an individual suffers, it is the responsibility of that individual to alleviate that suffering – not government or "society". To put it in the simplest form: "your own life – your own failure" (Beck & Beck-Gernsheim 2002: 24).

However, as Ulrich Beck and Elizabeth Beck-Gernsheim have argued it is not the case, as Thatcher would have it, that there is no such thing as society, but rather that society itself is individualized (Beck & Beck-Gernsheim 2002: xxii). The point is that individualization itself is a *social* phenomenon through and through as there are no options to opt out of the individualization process (Beck & Beck-Gernsheim 2002: 31; Bauman 2002: xvi). In other words, Thatcher and other neoliberals *need* "such a thing as society" in order to realize their political project. In neoliberalism society takes the shape of

what we might call an "individualization machine" meaning a set of institutions, laws, and discourses which produces individualization. This is the paradox of neoliberalism: neoliberalism must necessarily rely on society in its efforts to do away with it.[44]

This paradox explains how neoliberalism was influenced by nationalism while remaining in tension with it. Because neoliberal politicians inherited a national administrative apparatus, their individualization machines were built with national parts. The nation-state provided the political machinery needed to create an economy of suffering free of collective actors – including the nation-state itself. In such an individualized economy of suffering, "troubles are supposed to be suffered and coped with alone" (Bauman 2001: 86). It should be clear then why neoliberalism poses a great threat to solidarity: whereas solidarity implies a care for the suffering of others, neoliberalism demands that each individual is held responsible for his or her own suffering.

The problem is that while individuals are tasked with dealing with "their own" problems, the problems are in fact not "their own" but systemic and social in nature. While guilt and responsibility may be individualized, suffering is still socially produced (Bauman 2002: xvi). In Ulrich Beck's memorable expression, this means that we are asked "to seek biographical solutions to systemic contradictions" (Beck & Beck-Gernsheim 2002: xxii). The injunction to take responsibility for one's own life proves an impossible task for most people. As the American poet Gil Scott-Heron once remarked, sometimes freedom means "free doom" (Scott-Heron 1970). Under such conditions some individuals are bound to fail. Neoliberalism responds to such necessary failures by intensifying its insistence on individual responsibility. The individual alone is to blame for his misery. Naturally, such blame only produces more suffering and the economy of suffering grows.

As argued in Chapter 1, solidarity is a rational response to conditions of individualized suffering. However, neoliberalism makes it increasingly difficult to build bridges between the solitary islands we are becoming. An obvious response would be to try to reinforce the welfare model of solidarity which has proven successful in the past. However, when the welfare state could extend solidarity to all citizens, it was on the premise that solidarity was contained within the boundaries of the nation-state. This premise is proving increasingly difficult to sustain under conditions of globalization.

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[44] In contrast to Thatcher, some neoliberals do admit their dependence on political institutions. This acknowledgment, of course, does not make neoliberalism any less paradoxical.

4.4 The paradox of globalization

The same year that Thatcher gave her famous interview, Ronald Reagan visited Berlin to deliver a message to General Secretary of the USSR, Mikhail Gorbachev, in front of the Berlin Wall: "tear down this wall!" Reagan's words seems to have foreshadowed the opening of the Berlin Wall two years later and the subsequent collapse of the Soviet Union, which heralded an era of liberalization. The dream was a borderless world where freedom of movement would no longer be inhibited. The time had come, to "promote true openness, to break down barriers that separate people," as Reagan put it later in his Berlin speech (Reagan 1987).

Globalization significantly increases our freedom by freeing us from the constraints of space. We are no longer bound by our location. In a globalized world it does not matter so much *where* you are as the costs of going somewhere else are insignificant. Globalization also creates conditions for new bonds of solidarity to form. As noted above, the globalization of information brings into sight instances of suffering which were previously concealed and thus makes it possible to try to alleviate this suffering. Furthermore, as globalization makes us more and more globally interconnected, we may come to see ourselves as part of a global community of fate. A global form of organic solidarity which highlights our mutual interdependencies might emerge. Ulrich Beck's idea of a world society embodies this hope (Beck 2000).

However, these achievements of globalization are not evenly distributed across the globe. Our newfound freedom of movement is a prize for the few. For the great majority of the world's inhabitants, the freedom of globalization is experienced an imminent danger: "signalling a new freedom for some, upon many others it descends as an uninvited and cruel fate" (Bauman 1998: 2; see also Beck 2000: 90). There are those for whom globalization offers a buffet of opportunities without commitments. And there are those left behind by globalization, who has to deal with the mess when the global caravan pack up their tents and move on to other "greener pastures" (Bauman 1998: 105; Bauman 2001: 129).

The result is disorientation: we are no longer sure where to look for something to slow down a world spinning out of control. Martin Heidegger famously used the idea of thrownness to denote how people come into the world under conditions not of their own choosing (Heidegger 2008). It would be wrong to say that today we are no longer "thrown," that we have finally become masters of our own destiny. It is rather the case that we are perpetually thrown, every moment hurled into unchartered territory,

resulting in nausea and confusion. As Bauman puts it, "some of the world's residents are on the move; for the rest it is the world itself that refuses to stand still" (Bauman 2000: 58).

This is the paradox of globalization: while it increases our freedom of movement it also increases suffering around the world. Under globalization the two structural inclusion problems of modernity identified in Chapter 1, desocialization and proletarianization, reappear on a global scale. Desocialization intensifies as transnational flows move across borders unsettling existing modes of solidity and disembedding individuals from their known social habitat. Proletarianization also worsens as capitalist accumulation deepens the gap between winners and losers and creates a "surplus population" of "millions of functionally superfluous bodies that have simply been pushed aside" (Brunkhorst 2005: 123).

Globalization is thus fundamentally ambiguous with regards to solidarity: while it unravels existing forms of solidity it also discloses new possibilities of solidarity. In order to combat the forms of suffering associated with globalization and make up for their uneven distribution amongst the world's population, we need to explore the potentials of globalization for creating new forms of solidity suitable for our late modern world. Globalization both creates a need for solidarity and the conditions for such solidarity to emerge. However, in their efforts to regain control of a "runaway world" (Giddens 2002) many still look to the nation.

4.5 The paradox of nationalism

In an uncertain world of individualization and globalization, nationalism carries "the promise of a safe haven, the dream destination for sailors lost in a turbulent sea of constant, unpredictable and confusing change" (Bauman 2000: 171). Contrary to the hopes of some cosmopolitans, globalization does not do away with nationalism. Rather than heralding the nation's demise, globalization has seen the resurgence of chauvinistic nationalism and parochial sentiments (Beck & Beck-Gernsheim 2002: 151). As Wendy Brown notes, "the promise of a globally connected human world, one bathed in the liberal freedoms, is contravened by one in which cement, barbed wire, and surveillance appear the norm" (Brown 2010: 81).

This contradictory development might be explained by the way globalization undercuts the sovereign power of the nation-state. The late modern forces of global capital is making the modern state increasingly impotent so that today those in the control towers seem unable to do anything but crisis management. Rather than providing us with protection from the disrupting forces of global capital, the nation-state itself seems at least to a certain extent to have become the functionary of those very

forces.[45] As Bauman puts it, "the nation-states turn more and more into the executors and plenipotentiaries of forces which they have no hope of controlling politically" (Bauman 1998: 65). As a result, the nation-state becomes increasingly incapable of delivering the solidity that people seek. When the effective power of the nation-state is undercut by the forces of economic globalization, the boundaries of the nation can only provide an imaginary security. This may provide mental calm for a while, but the realities of globalization will sooner or later disrupt such tranquillity. When it does, the craving for solidity may intensify to make nationalism more assertive. This is the paradox of nationalism: the more the power of the nation seems to fade, the stronger it must be reasserted.

The paradox of nationalism exacerbates the paradox of solidarity as the assertiveness of nationalism finds expression in violence against "outsiders" as well as attempts to keep the outsiders out. As Bauman observes, strong nationalist try to assert a strict distinction between inside and outside: "all the rest is irrelevant; more exactly, hostile – a wilderness full of ambushes and conspiracies and bristling with enemies wilding chaos as their main weapons" (Bauman 2000: 172). When the outside is imagined as an inhospitable state of nature, isolation and containment becomes a natural strategy (Bauman 2000: 177). Walls provide an imagined reassurance against the anxieties of living in a seemingly borderless world: "danger, disorder, and violence are projected outside, and sovereign power is figured as securing a homogeneous, orderly, and safe national interior" (Brown 2010: 103). The problem is not only that this effectively limits solidarity to those inside the walls, but also that under conditions of globalization, isolation is impossible. As Ulrich Beck rightly notes, today "the notion of closed spaces has become illusory. No country or group can shut itself off from others" (Beck 2000: 10). As a result, the promise of solidity remains nothing but a promise. Even if the attempt to keep dangers out should succeed, it will not make the dangers go away. Those who dream of finding solace in a the national community will thus be continuously disappointed: "rather than an island of 'natural understanding', a 'warm circle' where they can lay down their arms and stop fighting, the *really existing* community will feel like a besieged fortress being continuously bombarded by (often invisible) enemies outside while time and again being torn apart by discord within; ramparts and turrets will be the places where the seekers of communal warmth, homeliness and tranquillity will have to spend most of their time" (Bauman 2001: 15, italics in original).

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[45] This is not in conflict with neoliberalism using the nation-state to implement its political project of individualizing the economy of suffering. First, the impotence of the nation-state is only relative, not absolute. Second, the neoliberal project is in accordance with the interests of global capital as workers are more easily managed if they are unorganized. Therefore, the subservice of the nation-state to global capital might actually serve to strengthen neoliberal policies.

As noted above, globalization is a complicated process with a number of inherent tensions yielding both an unprecedented freedom of movement and the construction of new barriers to hinder that very freedom. As Brown rightly observes, "what we have come to call a globalized world harbors fundamental tensions between opening and barricading, fusion and partition, erasure and reinscription" (Brown 2010: 7). To put it in the language of solidarity suggested here, globalization harbours fundamental tensions between solidity and liquidity, between binding people together and taking them apart. When it comes to solidarity, globalization is fundamentally ambiguous: it threatens to undermine solidarity by dissolving national ties of solidarity while at the same time harbouring the potential to extend solidarity beyond the bounds of the nation.

Taken together these paradoxes of individualization, neoliberalism, globalization, and nationalism make up the ambiguous terrain of late modernity, harbouring both threats against solidarity and potentials for new forms of solidarity to emerge. How do we maneuver this terrain to produce solidarity without engendering the excesses of the paradox of solidarity? As mentioned in Chapter 3, I favour an approach which builds on existing networks of solidarity. Therefore, as a way of concluding I will now discuss how two of the most dominant forms of solidarity today, nationalism and humanism, might be reworked in the light of this series of late modern paradoxes.

4.6 Finding the good in each other

In what follows, I will consider how the ideas about how to extend solidarity developed in Chapter 3 might be brought to bear on our contemporary condition. Thus I end where I started: the conflict between nationalist and humanists. The positions I outline here are somewhat idealized for the sake of simplicity. While the positions may not serve as accurate descriptions of actual instances of nationalism and humanism, I hope they nonetheless capture essential aspects of these forms of solidarity. For the purposes of this brief discussion, nationalism may be defined as a form of solidarity which centres its notion of solidity on the nation. Humanism on the other hand, may be defined as the view that solidarity should extend to all human beings regardless of their national, ethnic, and cultural background.

Recall that the strategy developed in Chapter 3 consisted of working on both ends of the paradox: with regards to *solidity*, we must examine the prejudices that structure it to make it as inclusive as possible and to ensure that we minimalize externalization of suffering to the greatest extent possible. With regards to *suffering*, we must open ourselves to the suffering of others and the possibility that they may suffer differently than ourselves. As mentioned in Chapter 3, I am committed the pluralistic view that

instead of aiming for one overreaching ideal of solidarity, we should allow different conceptions of solidarity to co-exist side by side. This means that my approach may inflect different conceptions of solidarity in different ways.

Let me start by noting how the two forms of solidarity relate to each other. As mentioned briefly in the introduction, nationalists and humanists are in "bad standing" as their respective conceptions of solidarity appear as obstacles or even threats to each other: nationalists blame humanists for undermining national solidarity and humanists blame nationalists for obstructing solidarity with those outside the nation. There is a clear risk that this conflict develops into a vicious circle where disagreement only grows stronger the more each party try to advocate their vision of solidarity. The result of this vicious circle is that efforts to build solidarity (paradoxically) end up destroying it. Therefore, we must avoid that solidarity-building turns into a deadlock where each party dig themselves deeper in their trenches.

In what follows I will provide some suggestions for how nationalists and humanists steer their respective notions of solidity away from such trench-digging and become more open to unacknowledged forms of suffering. What I offer is far from a detailed plan of what is to be done. My propositions might be taken up in different ways by different political actors depending on the context. However, I hope they will be sufficient to give a picture of what consequences might follow from my approach in the light of our current political predicament.

As noted above, the problem with chauvinistic nationalism is not only that it cannot deliver on its promises to provide perpetual security and solidity, but also that in its attempt to dull the anxieties and fears of its members, it creates more suffering and pain for those who are on the outside of the walls. Therefore, exclusionary nationalism is not an adequate answer to the challenges of solidarity facing us in today's globalizing world. This does not mean that we should discard the idea of the nation altogether. Nationalists should work on their idea of the nation to make it as inclusive as possible. However, there will be limits as to how inclusive it can become without losing the structure which gives it its solidity. If the nation becomes all-inclusive, it risks becoming fluid rather than solid. When those limits are reached, nationalists should work to resist the temptation to externalize suffering. While those outside the nation may not enjoy the benefits of nationalist solidarity, we may still try to avoid the extent to which that solidarity itself becomes a source of suffering for them. In other words, we may seek transforms paradoxical solidarity to limited solidarity.

With regards to suffering, nationalists must work to become more open to those forms of suffering that elide their vision because they are rooted in a different cultural habitus. The Muhammed Cartoon Crisis may provide an example. Many Danes found it difficult to understand the suffering experienced by some Muslims in seeing (mocking) depictions of their Prophet.[46] Those Danes might engage in dialogues with Muslims to better understand how Muslims experienced the cartoons.[47] As a result, those Danes may become more open to the plurality of forms suffering takes and to the idea that the suffering of others may be worthy of our care even if it does not look familiar to the forms of suffering we are familiar with.

What about humanists? Given the universalist undercurrent of my argument discussed in the beginning of Chapter 3, it might be thought that my approach looks more favourably to the humanist notion of solidarity than the more limited nationalist form. However, humanism is also characterized by blind spots and tensions. Starting with the suffering end of the paradox, I find that many humanists overlook the suffering that nationalists experience as a result of globalization. Because they view nationalism as a threat to their notion of solidarity, humanists tend to overlook the anxiety induced in nationalists as globalization threatens to undermine their notion of solidity.

However, I think the biggest limitation of humanism lies at the solidity end of the paradox. Humanist solidarity is notoriously vague when it comes to the notion of solidity meant to underpin it. In order to bind individuals together, a notion of solidity must have a clear contour and shape. In the absence of clear structures, solids turn to fluids. Humanists must readily face the fact that without a source of solidity, solidarity evaporates. Some humanists may say that solidity can be provided by a global community of world citizens. However, such community does not currently seem to be on the horizon. Humanists must therefore provide a more convincing notion of solidity. Until they do, they have to accept that humanist solidarity is parasitical on more particularistic forms of solidarity such as nationalism. This means that for the time being that humanists cannot expect their solidarity to be extended universally without undermining itself. As argued in Chapter 3, there is nothing in theory

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[46] For critical exchange about the kind of suffering involved in the Cartoon Crisis see Mahmood 2009 and March 2011. See also March 2012. For recent discussions in political theory about how to respond to the suffering experienced by some Muslims as a result of the Muhammed Cartoons, see Asad et al. 2009; Bleich 2006; Carens 2006; Hansen 2006a; Hansen 2006b; Modood 2006a; Modood 2006b; O'Leary 2006; Rostbøll 2009; Tønder 2011a; Tønder 2011b.

[47] To be clear I am not advocating that one cannot be a Muslim and a Dane at the same time. Neither am I suggesting that all Muslims experienced the cartoons in the same way.

which hinders a universal form of solidity, but in practice most existing forms of solidarity rely on the particularity of a more limited community to give solidarity its adhesive power.

4.7 Conclusion: solidarity unbound

To sum up, the paradoxical terrain of late modernity is an ambiguous landscape in which solidarity might be expanded towards new and unseen horizons or become stuck in the trenches. Different forms of solidarity might develop to become more inclusive and less harmful. Or they might intensify the excesses of the paradox to produce more suffering. Globalization elucidates the problems which were always latent in the nationalist welfare state model of solidarity. The universalism of this model was always limited by the particularistic boundaries of the nation-state. But as globalization is making increasingly clear, the world does not end at the boundaries of the nation-state. Therefore, humanists are right to argue that our solidarity should extend beyond these boundaries. Nationalists, on the other hand, are right to argue that globalization threatens to undermine existing forms of solidarity. Both are right and both are wrong. If nationalists and humanists open themselves to learn from each other, they might come to reflect and amplify the good in each other. Such dialogue might then lead to a fusion of horizons where both nationalists and humanists become more aware of and affected by unfamiliar forms of suffering to install a more embracing care for the well-being of others.

However, the paradoxical nature of solidarity warns us against expectations of a seamless horizon free of suffering. We must give up the idea of perfect solidity. Where the atoms come to a complete standstill, there is no life. This means that we are bound to face dilemmas. For example, should European countries extend solidarity to refugees from Africa and the Middle East or keep their borders closed in order to preserve national solidarity? There are no simple answers to such questions. Payoffs and compromises will have to be made. Our assessment must always be strategic, taking into account the moral and political landscape we inhabit, seeking to expand solidarity here but maybe not there.

We should be prepared to accept our own involvement in others' suffering. Such acceptance must not, however, turn into resignation. Rather we should actively work on the prejudices structuring our notions of solidity to reduce such suffering as much as possible. This is what is means to live with and within the paradox rather than evade it. The existence of the paradox does not determine how we respond to it. There are different ways to negotiate the paradox and some are clearly better than others. To enlarge our room for action, we must try to enlarge the openings where we find them. As Connolly puts it, "the political task, in a time of closure and danger, is to try to open up what is enclosed, to try to think thoughts that stretch and extend fixed patterns of insistence" (Connolly 1991: 59). While the

dilemmas are unlikely to disappear, we may work to transform them to show new possibilities for solidarity-making.

In this thesis, I have argued that we must limit the excesses of the paradox of solidarity and extend solidarity where it is possible. If the solidary bonds become too rigid, they may become sources of suffering for outsiders. Therefore solidarity must be cautiously unravelled from the those notions of solidity which cause enmity and hatred across divides. However, we must acknowledge that there are limits to how open solidarity can become without dissipating altogether. If we loosen the bonds too much, solidity evaporates. If we tighten them too much, suffering ensues. This is the challenge facing us today: solidarity must become unbounded without being undone.

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