# Identity Construction in Sociohistorical Context

Ian Burkitt

**Abstract**

The goal of this chapter is to trace the historical roots of the modern Western sense of identity as constituted by the possession of an 'inner' self. In contrast to other authors who have traced this notion to Puritanism and Romanticism, or to the Scottish Enlightenment, I begin with the Greco-Roman conception of *persona*, focusing on the way this concept indicated *both* self as mask or public presentation *and* self as the true nature of the individual. This was expanded with the Stoic idea of self-mastery through moderation as a route to self-improvement. I then argue that the tension between self as public persona and self as a private possession grew in the sixteenth century under the influence of the humanist movement. In particular, Erasmus was the first to employ the theatrical metaphor of the world as a stage with all the people on it playing their parts. Erasmus also reinterpreted the Stoic ideal of self-mastery at a time when social controls were moving away from external forces onto the individual psychological plane, so that people were expected to control themselves. In yet a different power structure during the eighteenth century, Adam Smith reinterpreted Stoicism in the context of a commercial capitalist economy, emphasising how we shape our own behaviour by seeing ourselves as we imagine others do. This sets the scene for the different views of self and identity found in psychology today, particularly in symbolic interactionism.

The idea that identity construction varies across time and place, according to a person's location in specific historical and cultural contexts, is not a new one. However, this idea still seems to occupy the fringes of the literature in psychology in general and, to a lesser extent, social psychology. In the contemporary Western world we often hear people say that they are 'searching for themselves' or looking for answers to the question 'Who am I?' (Burkitt, 2008), which could perhaps be phrased in a more interesting way as 'Who are you?' (see Vignoles, Schwartz, & Luyckx, Chapter 1, this volume). The key point for me, however, is that in the Western world

I. Burkitt (✉)
Department of Social Sciences and Humanities, University of Bradford, Bradford, UK
e-mail: i.burkitt@bradford.ac.uk

when individuals look for answers to these questions, they tend to look 'inside' themselves, as if the secret of who they are is locked away inside like a pearl in its shell. A popular song has recently exhorted 'look for the hero inside yourself', something which echoes the common belief that the answers you seek, or the resources you need to succeed, are already there inside 'yourself'. Again, we find here another popular belief; that what we call our self – our own individual identity or sense of 'I' – is a private possession to be found inside, although no one is specific on its exact internal location. However, historical and cross-cultural studies across a range of disciplines suggest this very experience of individual identity as constituting an internal self, one that can be reflected upon and questioned, is an experience particular to the contemporary Western world and not a trans-historical or trans-cultural phenomenon. As Danziger (1997) has put it, the self is not a natural object in the psychological sciences, but is constituted by the very practices we use to reflect upon ourselves. Furthermore, these practices – such as the way we talk, write and think about ourselves – vary historically and culturally, so that human identity changes over time and between places and is 'constructed' within interpersonal exchanges (see Bamberg, Schiffrin, & De Fina, Chapter 8, this volume).

My goal in this chapter is to trace the historical roots of the modern Western sense of identity as constituted by the possession of an 'inner' self. However, the story is much more complex than this, because all cultures are made up of a variety of different, often conflicting, traditions that offer a variety of different positions on the self. My argument here is that, beginning with ancient Greco-Roman society and culture, the contemporary West has inherited cultural traditions which emphasise the importance of a person's public persona – in terms of status, rank, class or reputation – alongside a growing belief that we can be identified also by something uniquely personal; a self that is internal to our very being, to which we have unique access, and that can only be seen by others if we choose to reveal it to them. *One of the key themes of this chapter, therefore, will be*

*the changing relation between the public and private realm and the effect this has had on the sense of self as a private possession.*

It has been argued by a range of authors, many of whom are reviewed in this chapter, that the sense of private 'internal' selfhood has grown stronger through the history of the West, from the Anglo-Saxon tradition in Britain, and more generally from the Christian tradition that spread throughout Europe after the fall of the Roman Empire. Authors such as Baumeister (1987) have traced the Western history of the self from the eleventh century in England, through the influence of Puritanism in sixteenth-century Europe, with the establishment of an 'individual' relationship to God (Weber, 1905/1985), and particularly the influence of Romanticism in the eighteenth century that emphasised the split between society and the individual. This can be seen most clearly in Jean-Jacques Rousseau's notion that human nature is inherently good, but can be corrupted by society (Taylor, 1989). Not only did this create a gulf between social and individual identity, it led the Romantics to value the expression of individuality above all else, especially in the creative arts. Alternatively, Danziger (1997) has emphasised the role of the Scottish Enlightenment in the eighteenth century and the work of John Locke and Adam Smith as being important in creating the modern sense of self, something I will refer to later in this chapter. Just this brief review shows that writing a historical perspective on identity construction in the West is a massive task that could take many different angles, as indeed have books on the subject by Charles Taylor (1989) and Jerrold Seigel (2005).

Given this, any single chapter cannot be exhaustive, so instead I have chosen to focus on particular elements in the historical formation of Western identity. First, I examine debates about the Greco-Roman conception of the self as a mask or *persona* and how this is linked to public life, with many contemporary authors believing this public and visible experience of self left little room for the experience of an invisible, 'interior' core of self. I adopt this approach because the roots of many of the current notions of self in the West begin in Greco-Roman society, and

also because I believe that in the Greco-Roman philosophy known as Stoicism we find the seeds of the notion of self that are reinterpreted in other historical epochs. Second, this leads me to focus on the time around the sixteenth century in Western Europe when notions of social life as a staged drama became popular, particularly in the work of humanists like Erasmus (who also reinterpreted Stoicism for his age), and to consider the societal and historical conditions surrounding this. My argument will be that the idea of the public presentation of self as a mask or performance became accentuated at a time when people started to feel they had more of an invisible, reflective relationship with themselves that others could not immediately see or share in. The idea and feeling then started to emerge that the image we present to others is not necessarily the image that we hold of our own self. In my view, this cannot be separated from a satiric or ironic stance taken on society, which sees it as a theatre for the staging of performances that are often ingenuous or in some other way false. Finally, I look at the Scottish Enlightenment and the work of Adam Smith and its influence on contemporary notions of the self, such as symbolic interactionism. Unlike Baumeister (1987) and Danziger (1997), then, I trace the Western notion of the self to roots much earlier in ancient cultures and argue that here we can see the seeds of some aspects of modern forms of identity. Just as I believe that modern Western notions of the self are composed of different cultural traditions with many different roots, so I believe there to be both continuity *and* radical shifts across historical time scales, some of which I will attempt to trace.

Although I argue here that changes to the formation of self over time are influenced by changing cultural traditions – such as philosophical and, later, social and psychological theories, as well as literature and drama – these discursive or textual productions do not 'float free' of other aspects of the social context, such as power relations between social groups (classes and professional groups) and the material context of peoples' lives. I draw attention to these factors throughout the chapter, because being able to regard oneself as having a private self is based

not only on the *idea* of such a thing, but that this is also recognised as valuable by others in society, is protected in law, and accommodated by social institutions, i.e. having private spaces for study, work or thought, and private places like homes or other properties where we can retreat. That identity is integral to power relations can be illustrated by the example of ancient Greco-Roman cultures, where women and slaves were not regarded as persons and could not participate in public life as men could. This severely restricted the ways in which women and slaves could create an identity for themselves, even in private where women were subservient to more powerful men.

A key problem in studying how identity has changed over long historical time scales is that people from earlier eras are no longer available to speak about how they understood themselves or how they regarded their identity. All that we have left from the distant past is the written records that people have left us in books (autobiographies and novels), letters and diaries. Although this is good evidence about how people wrote about themselves, a key question emerges about whether this is the same as how people actually experienced themselves. In other words, has the self remained the same over the millennia and across cultures, so that 'people are basically the same everywhere' and only the forms of expression – such as language and other social conventions – have changed? Or do people change as society and culture change? My argument is the latter. I argue this case because the writings of psychologists such as Lev Vygotsky (1987) and G. H. Mead (1964) have persuaded me that language does not express thoughts that already exist, but provides the tools to bring thoughts into existence. Language is a tool not just to express a thought already there, but to articulate it for oneself (a thought) or for others (a verbal expression). Equally, identity is not formed prior to our upbringing and our life in a particular place and time; instead, the historical context is the very means by which we bring identity into existence. It is formed not just by the relation we have to our own self, but prior to that by the way we are interrelated to others and the power relations that both enable and constrain the

possibilities to become a certain sort of person. Hopefully, this will be illustrated in the following sections, in which I look at historical studies and writers who have accounted for identity construction in different historical epochs of the Western world.

## The Ancient Person of the West: *Persona* and Self

According to Marcel Mauss's famous essay on the notion of the 'person' (Mauss, 1938/1985), this word came into use in a way recognisable to modern Westerners in ancient Latin culture. Similar words and concepts to that of 'person' or 'persona' had existed in tribal societies, but had referred to the masks worn in public ceremonies that indicated the individual's title, rank, role or ancestry. However, in ancient Roman society, although the term 'persona' originally kept its meaning as a 'mask' used in theatre or the right to assume a ritual role, it began its transmutation into a fact of law that established the rights of the freeborn as citizens with ownership of their own person. Here the seed seems to have been sown that established the notion of the person in the dual meaning in which it is still regarded today: on the one hand as an artificial character that is 'the mask and role of comedy and tragedy, of trickery and hypocrisy', while on the other hand it is regarded as 'synonymous with the true nature of the individual' (Mauss, 1938/1985, p. 17). Thus, slaves are excluded from the law as they have no personality and do not even own their body. In this example, we see some of the main themes I highlighted in the introduction; that it is in the language of a particular culture (at a certain place and time, with many different traditions coming together to create it) that an idea slowly forms which still has familiar elements today. In particular, the notion that personhood is a right – for example, we have the right to self-determination – and synonymous with who we truly are or want to be: at the same time, as a public mask or role, persona can be presented to others in ways that misrepresent this

truth and, thus, can involve falsehood. As a public status, personhood is also a right that can be given to some and denied to others, depending on their place in the power structure of society.

For the freeborn in ancient Roman society – those born outside of slavery – the notion of the person was also enriched through their reliance on the Greek thinkers for their education, and this developed as a stream of Greco-Roman thought reflected in the Stoic philosophers of the Roman Empire such as Seneca (4 BC–65 AD), Epictetus (55–135 AD) and Aurelius (121–180 AD). These thinkers understood the person to be a subject of not only law but also moral conscience and free will, one who could examine his daily habits and routines and, through this, improve himself. For example, through strict regimens of diet and exercise people could strengthen their will and, thus, improve their character. In recent years, attention has been drawn to the Stoic philosophers because of the claims of Michel Foucault (1988a, 1988b) that, despite their concern with care of the self through improved daily routines and practices, there is still no move towards the analysis of self in Stoicism. In other words, there is still no hint of the idea that each individual is the possessor of an invisible, metaphysical soul that can be analysed and revealed to others, a notion that only emerges in Christian and, later, in secular Western culture. People may have tried to improve themselves, but they did so through what Foucault called 'practices of the self', rather than through self-analysis that would reveal some previously hidden truth about themselves. Self-improvement was a social practice not a private interrogation.

However, there is still debate among scholars as to the time at which a concept of the self appears that resembles the contemporary Western notion, where self-identity is understood as something private and 'internal'. Christopher Gill (2008) believes that, until around 200 AD, ancient thought considered the self in 'objective-participant' rather than 'subjective-individualist' terms. According to Gill, the 'objective-participant' position means that self is understood primarily in terms of its role and place in public life, rather than

by reflective reference to some notion of an 'inner' world of thoughts and feelings that are separate from the public sphere, which would be the 'subjective-individualist' position. In contrast, Richard Sorabji (2006) believes that even the ancient Greeks had an understanding of self that included both positions. Although Sorabji does not deny the importance of public life for the ancients, or the importance of the public persona, nevertheless he believes that, to build this persona, the person must be capable of reflecting upon his choices and actions. Thus, for Sorabji, while the ancient philosophers all differed in their conception of the self, there was an intense preoccupation with 'the idea of *me* and *me again*' (Sorabji, 2006, p. 4): in other words, there is intense reflection on the continuation of a person's identity through time, which must have some 'inner' referent for the individual involved in it. While Gill (2008) agrees with this, he nevertheless believes that focusing on the individual or self distorts the main concern of the ancients, which was to make personal decisions and self-improvement compatible with objective ethical norms. Thus, the Stoic individual *persona* is important in this quest, but only to make it consistent with the first *persona*, which was universal reason, as embodied in God. The path to self-improvement through the achievement of virtue and happiness could only be found in the search for objective norms, and this depended on participation in social life and the intellectual community; hence Gill's belief that self in ancient times was based on objective-participant patterns of thinking and experience. In the ancient world, self is not to be thought of in subjective-individualist terms, either in Sorabji's sense of the self being 'I' or 'me' centred, or in Foucault's terms as being concerned primarily with care and aestheticism of the self; rather the ultimate concern was being virtuous by aligning the whole being of a person with objective norms. According to Gill (2006) the main purpose was to achieve a cohesive character state that could be described as the 'structured self', in which all the elements of one's being, including the individual *persona*, were brought into harmony with the first *persona* of universal reason.

Despite this, Marcus Aurelius's autobiographical text *Meditations* (170–180 AD) is exceptional because – although it can be regarded in Gill's terms as objective-participant, as it contains a long list of public debts to relatives, teachers and friends – there can be found in it a description of an interiority or mind which Aurelius sees as being part of a relation to his own self. As Aurelius wrote in *Meditations*:

> Men look for retreats for themselves, the country, the seashore, the hills; and you yourself, too, are peculiarly accustomed to feel the same want. Yet all this is very unlike a philosopher, when you may at any hour you please retreat into yourself. For nowhere does a man retreat into more quiet or more privacy than into his own mind, especially one who has within such things that he has only to look into, and become at once in perfect ease; and by ease I mean nothing else but good behaviour. Continually, therefore, grant yourself this retreat and repair yourself. But let them be brief and fundamental truths...to send you back without repugnance to the life to which you return. (Aurelius, 170–180/1992, p. 18)

The above does not necessarily contradict Gill's notion that figures like Aurelius still cannot be seen in subjective-individualist terms, as concern for self and interiority is not the primary focus of the text – instead, this is primarily concerned with public forms of good conduct as exemplified by forebears and teachers – and it is clear from what Aurelius says above that people could only find ease in themselves if what they found there could be brought into line with good behaviour, presumably as guided by objective norms. However, it is also clear that there is reference to the possibility of a man like Aurelius finding quiet in the private contemplation of the things he finds 'within': a retreat into a location that is described above as 'yourself' or 'his own mind'. Nevertheless, this retreat must be brief as it was meant only to send people back repaired to their public life. In the same section of the *Meditations* on the next page (Book IV, 3, p. 19), Aurelius refers to 'your retreat into this little domain which is yourself', making it clear that the self within is seen as small and insignificant when compared to the importance of public conduct. As Momigliano (1985) concludes of

ancient autobiographies, we can see in them that the quest for self knowledge, expressed through the articulation of an 'interior' life that today in the West we would think of as a private self, is emerging in the ancients only slowly and incompletely. As the Russian linguist and literary theorist Mikhail Bakhtin has put it,

> It is only with the Hellenistic and Roman epochs that we have the beginnings of a translation of whole spheres of existence – within the individual himself, as well as in the world outside him – onto a *mute register*, and into something that is in principle invisible. But this process was also far from completed in ancient times. (1981, p. 134, author's emphasis)

What Bakhtin is arguing above is supportive of Christopher Gill's position, that it is not until the later stages of ancient Roman civilisation that we find in literary texts, especially autobiographies, reference to an interior world of thoughts and feelings that are expressed in terms of a private realm that is distinct from the public one; a world that would remain mute and invisible to others in society if it were not given clear linguistic articulation; an invisible 'interior' place that today in the West we would regard as the province of the self. And it is not just that the individual recognises that they have thoughts and feelings – something people have surely always had – it is that now they can express them without the external mediation of official, authoritative social ideologies, values or norms. Whereas the ancient Greeks and early Romans had attributed the events of their biographies, their actions and choices, and their quest for personal improvement, to external sources – to the status of ancestors and family reputation, to philosophical teachers and universal norms – someone like Aurelius could, before his death in 180 AD, refer *a small portion* of this to the authority of his own mind, separate from the public realm.

However, to express *and create* the sense of a private world, there must also be created a language that everyone can recognise whereby it can be articulated in words, either for oneself or for others. To do this, Bakhtin claims that there were three modifications to literary autobiographical and biographical forms in the Hellenistic and Roman period. The first refers to satirical, ironic or humorous treatments of one's self and life, which parodied public forms of rhetorical self-accounting along with the heroic forms of identity contained in traditional epic or adventure styles of storytelling. Parody was used because there were no official public forms in which personal and private topics could be given expression, so they were clothed in irony and humour as a way around official styles without openly challenging them. The second modification was in the writing of letters, as represented by Cicero's letters to Atticus. Through the *familiar letter* written to a trusted friend or teacher individuals developed a style of writing (and speech) more suited to the expression of private thoughts, feelings and sensations that could not be expressed through public and rhetorical forms. Through the letter, forms of rhetoric began to develop suitable to private living spaces, and 'a new private sense of self, suited to the drawing room, began to emerge' (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 143). Foucault (1988a) has also focused on the practice of writing letters in ancient Greco-Roman cultures as one of the key 'technologies of self' that were employed in the creation of the private sense of self. The third type of modification, according to Bakhtin, is the Stoic style of autobiography, including Seneca's letters, Marcus Aurelius' *Meditations* and later in Christian literature such as St. Augustine's *The Confessions*. For Bakhtin these developments herald the advent of a new form of relating to oneself characterised by a solitary conversation. It is this private and, to others, inaudible 'inner conversation' that a modern social psychologist like G. H. Mead (1964) would equate with the social self – the 'I' conversing with the 'me'.

To summarise here, we can see from scholarly discussions about the self in the ancient Western world that, although there is still controversy over the exact nature of the person and self in ancient times, there is some consensus that, in the Hellenistic period and particularly in the Roman Empire, some of the foundations were laid on which eventually there appeared the modern conception of self as a private 'inner'

place. First, there is the establishment of the dualistic notion of the 'person' *both* as an artificial character or mask (which can entail trickery and hypocrisy) *and* as being synonymous with the true nature of the individual – someone who is more than just the mask he or she wears in public life. Second, there is the development of parody and satire as styles that critique official forms of self-accounting, along with the emergence of the familiar letter in which a more private style of writing was created. Lastly, there was the Stoic autobiography, especially the work of Marcus Aurelius, in which written autobiographies reflect some elements of private thoughts and feelings rather than the public defence of a life and its works. In autobiographies such as those written by the Stoics, we can witness the faint beginnings of the mute, invisible core of the self as the centre of all experience, with which we have a private, reflexive relationship not open to anyone else unless we allow them access. As Foucault (1988a) has said, writing becomes an important technique of the self in which this sphere of experience was created rather than merely reflected. Yet there was also parody and satire as a style of writing in which the masks people wear are exposed and questioned and the false is unmasked. This style truly came into its own in the early Renaissance in Western Europe and with it both the metaphor of the world as a stage and the private relation to one's own self were accentuated.

Before moving on to the Renaissance period, it is worth saying a word or two about St. Augustine and the pivotal role he is thought to have played in the development of the sense of interiority in the Western subjective-individualist standpoint on the self. Taylor (1989) sees Augustine's writings as a precursor to the modern sense of self, with the establishment in the *Confessions* of the inner nature of the human soul and of God. People are then exhorted to look inwards to find God and truth and not outwards to objective principles or norms located in the social world, and, beyond it, in the created nature of the universe. Thus Augustine constitutes the clearest recorded beginning of the 'turn inwards' (Taylor, 1989) and is a forerunner of Descartes' 'I' in the

formula 'I think therefore I am', which placed the power of private, rational thought at the heart of Western philosophy in the seventeenth century, and also at the heart of Western identity.

However, Pauliina Remes (2008) has cautioned against seeing Augustine's work as constituting too much of a radical break from what went before. Remes traces elements of Augustine's ideas on, and experience of, the self to novelties that are explicit or implicit in the work of Plotinus. Nevertheless, Remes does argue for novelty in Augustine, especially in the way he links memory (which he believes to be an infinite resource) to the temporal generation of the soul that begins in infancy, thus preceding later notions of time, self and narrative (see McAdams, Chapter 5, this volume). In contrast to Aurelius in his autobiography, just over 200 years earlier, in which he placed himself in the lineage of his family without mentioning his birth or childhood, giving him a fixed social status in the eyes of his readers, Augustine begins his story with his birth and childhood, which is the starting point for the train of his highly personalised memories. For Augustine, then, his own self was traced to a personalised beginning and understood as moulded by experience over time. The self was therefore understood as open to change, just as the past was constantly open to reinterpretation and was, thus, infinite. Furthermore, Remes believes that privacy of the self takes on a new meaning in Augustine, through his recognition of a phenomenal world that is distinct from the real world and which can also be hidden from others. This private phenomenal world is described by a series of metaphors such as 'the fields and vast mansions of memory, where are treasured innumerable images' (Augustine, 397/1998, p. 204) and 'the measureless plains and vaults and caves of my memory', which 'is the mind, and this is nothing other than my very self' (397/1998, p. 213). Again, in contrast to Aurelius's autobiography, in which the mind or self was referred to as an internal retreat that was only a 'little domain', now for Augustine that sense of interior self has expanded into vast mansions and measureless plains. While this notion of the mind as inner self, or 'I', would be taken much further by

Descartes over a 1000 years later, what I want to focus on in the next section is how, around the same time as Descartes, others were advancing the idea of the 'outer' self or self-image as mask and performance.

However, we must be wary of treating that gap of over a 1000 years between Augustine and Descartes as a 'dark ages' of the self, in which there was little change in the historical notion of self-identity. As Harbus (2002) points out, literature from Anglo-Saxon England from the sixth to the eleventh centuries – indebted to native, pre-Christian traditions, along with the imported Christian Latin culture – depicts experiences of the scrutiny of inner life and of struggles within the self. There is also a concern in some of this literature to hide this inner reality and turmoil from others and to put on a brave face in public. Thus, the idea of individuals as self-reflective agents who monitor their inner thoughts and feelings, deciding what to keep private and what to show to the world, is one that features recurrently in Old English literature, suggesting this experience was common to both readers and writers. It perhaps contains both the traditions of ancient Latin culture, of seeing the self as a public persona *and* as what is most synonymous with the individual as a unique identity, and that of Christian thought, in which the self is experienced as an inner soul that can be filled with conflict and turmoil. It is clear, then, that the more we delve into the historical, literary record, the more we find continuity as well as radical breaks in the many cultural strands that make up the historical construction of identity in the West.

## Self and Self-Image: The Renaissance and the Deployment of Folly, Parody and Satire

Many have argued that the birthplace of the philosophy of the subject, formulated in the first person 'I', is to be found in the seventeenth-century work of René Descartes (Ricoeur, 1992), and that it is only after him that subjective knowledge becomes central for Western philosophy (Burnyeat, 1982). However, just prior to Descartes in the sixteenth century, the literary styles of parody and satire, in which folly appeared as a literary trope, were employed to create some new attitudes and thinking about the self, particularly in terms of the division between the public role of the person and the private experience of self. In their different ways, both Bakhtin and Norbert Elias have illustrated how the mask of folly and the literary styles of satire and parody were used to unmask the pretensions of the ruling classes in early Renaissance Europe, obliquely calling into question their status and the grounds of their power in the trappings of wealth and status. Against this there emerged the idea of judging the worthiness of the individual who occupied a role or possessed status, rather than respect for office or rank in itself. In this, we can see how changing notions of identity are linked to the power struggles between various social groups and classes.

Although Bakhtin (1981) was primarily interested in literature, he realised that the rise of popular literary genres emerged from the changing nature of everyday life, in which the novel is situated and where the experiences of individuals are set. And the changing nature of everyday life was increasingly becoming characterised by heteroglossia[1] – the diversification of language. The novel represents and reinforces these changes and is also important in representing the changing nature of the relation that people had to their own self. In this regard, Bakhtin recognises that the self, as reflected in popular literature, has become double: it is the object of the gaze of others and the subject of its own gaze; it reflects both the exterior and the interior of the self, the public and the private person; the visible self and the invisible unknown self; the verbal and the mute. Reflecting on what occurred after the breakdown of the public image of humanity in the Hellenistic and Roman ages, Bakhtin writes:

> In the following epochs, man's image was distorted by his increasing participation in the mute and invisible spheres of existence. He was literally drenched in muteness and invisibility. And with them entered loneliness. The personal and detached human being – 'the man who exists for

himself' – lost the unity and wholeness that had been a product of his public origin. . . The human image became multi-layered, multi-faceted. A core and a shell, an inner and an outer, separated within it. (1981, pp. 135–136)

This literary tradition continues some of the characteristics of Old English literature, as detailed by Harbus, in that there is a distinction between the public and private self, only for Bakhtin this division is widening in the sixteenth century, so that much more emphasis is placed on the inner (mute and invisible) sphere of existence. In the novel of the sixteenth century, as in the everyday world, people were no longer characterised as unified characters, nor could they be wholly defined by a social category or type; instead they are much more psychologically complex and nuanced. In the Renaissance novel, certain types – such as the clown, the fool and the rogue – appear as masks or metaphors that act also to unmask, in that they parody or ridicule official social life or public figures. This continues the role of parody that was established in ancient Hellenist and Roman culture, where official styles of self-presentation are satirised in order to find more unofficial ways to carve out a space for private experiences. In Renaissance literature, the hypocritical and false nature of feudal social relations and ideology are satirised, as are the roles that people play, which are seen as overly conventional or inauthentic. A classic example is the work of Erasmus, who, in his books on manners, both reported on and satirised the manners of court society for the upwardly mobile middle classes (Elias, 2000). Thus, the middle classes could learn about the type of manners and conduct that would provide access to the court for themselves and their children, while being able to mock the aristocracy for their artificial and overly refined style of self-presentation. A concern was developing here for sincerity as opposed to false and hypocritical social displays, and this cannot be separated from the power struggles of the times.

As Trilling (1971) has noted, people in sixteenth-century Europe became obsessed with deception and pretence in social life, and at this time the analogy of individuals being like actors,

playing parts on the social stage, emerged as a powerful metaphor. This was most famously employed by Shakespeare who, in serio-comic style, wrote:

> All the world's a stage,
> And all the men and women merely players;
> All have their exits and their entrances;
> And one man in his time plays many parts
> (William Shakespeare, 1599–1603, *As You Like It*, Act II, Scene VII, lines 139–142).

There is also recognition in the above quotation that people do not just play one role in society, but can play many different parts. When Shakespeare wrote this he was referring to the life cycle, in which, at different stages of life, individuals must take on different roles. However, the point Shakespeare makes above is still familiar today; that there is nothing necessarily consistent about the roles we play in life and, thus, unity and continuity of identity is not to be expected.

In expressing this view, Shakespeare said something that reflected the sentiment of his times, with the prevailing concern for sincerity and pretence. Furthermore, Shakespeare was influenced by Erasmus (Gash, 1998), one of the leading figures of Renaissance humanism. Consider the quotation below from Erasmus (written 88 years before Shakespeare's play) and its striking similarity to the view of Shakespeare that all the world is a stage:

Now what else is the whole life of mortals but a sort of comedy, in which the various actors, disguised by various costumes and masks, walk on and play each one his part, until the manager waves them off the stage? Moreover, this manager frequently bids the same actor go back in different costume, so that he who has but lately played the king in scarlet now acts the flunkey in patched clothes. Thus all things are presented by shadows; yet this play is put on in no other way. (Erasmus, 1511/1941, p. 37)

This idea of life being like a staged drama, with its concomitant concern with the sincerity and duplicity of social 'actors', was clearly of central importance to the humanist movement. In general terms, the humanists advocated the study of grammar, rhetoric, moral philosophy

and poetry, particularly through the study of primary literary sources of Latin and Greek texts which had been rediscovered by Western scholars earlier in the Renaissance. For Erasmus, as we shall see, the independent study of primary texts also extended to the Bible, a position which implicated bypassing the established ecclesiastical authorities and their interpretation of scripture. In their respective biographies of Erasmus, both Cornelis Augustijn (1991) and Margaret Mann Phillips (1949) point out that, as part of the humanist movement, he turned against the traditions and custom of his day, whether it was in the orthodoxies of the Roman church or the customs of Medieval, knightly courtesy. Erasmus could do this because he and his fellow humanists were no longer wholly dependent on church or court for their position, as they were also partly employed by universities and schools in the relatively autonomous cities. Looking back to the culture and learning of classical antiquity, both Latin and Greek, especially to the Stoics, the humanists emphasised self-discipline and the formation of a well-balanced character achieved through the development of capacities in education. This learning took place mainly through independent reading of the Bible and the classics, thus circumventing the teachings of the established Roman church, stripping it of much of its power and authority.

In this changed power structure, where thinkers like Erasmus were gaining greater independence, they could begin to critique official roles and statuses in ways that earlier philosophers and writers could not. They also argued that authority should not rest on the 'external' trappings of wealth and power, such as fine clothing and jewellery, but on the 'inner' qualities of a person cultivated through education. For example, for Erasmus the behaviour of the Pope was regarded as too grandiose and authoritarian, and Kings and nobles who believed that they fulfilled the part of a sovereign by going hunting, feeding the horses, selling offices at a profit to themselves, or taking taxes only to increase their own wealth, were mocked mercilessly. In *The Praise of Folly*, Erasmus railed against all authorities that were too pompous or overbearing or

that took the trappings of their roles, status and privileges as ends in themselves rather than as the public marks of their duty. Erasmus uses the authorial voice of folly as a mask behind which he can unmask and critique all the pretension and trappings of power, wealth and status. He says of Kings:

> Fashion me now a man such as princes commonly are, a man ignorant of the laws, almost an enemy of the public welfare, intent upon private gain, addicted to pleasure, a hater of learning, a hater, too, of liberty and truth, thinking about anything except the safety of the state, and measuring all things by his own desire and profit. Then put on him a golden chain, symbolizing the union of all virtues linked together; set on him a crown adorned with gems, which is to remind him that he ought to surpass others in every heroic quality. In addition, give him a scepter, emblem of justice and of a heart in no way corrupted, and finally a scarlet robe, badge of a certain eminent love of the realm. If a prince really laid his own life alongside these symbols, I believe he would have the grace to be ashamed of his finery. He would be afraid some nosy satirist might turn the whole spectacle, suited as it is for high tragedy, into laughter and derision. (Erasmus, 1511/1941, p. 95)

Although many have criticised *The Praise of Folly*, even today, as being a parody of everything, one should note here that the tone of irony has a purpose: to criticise all that Erasmus sees as false and insincere about the old order and to pose against it another set of values: virtue over status, wisdom over learning, self-discipline over indulgence, rationality over passion, truth over falsity of all kinds, service over self-seeking, faith in God over self-importance, and self-refinement over social display. In other words, he was arguing for greater emphasis to be placed on personal qualities of the self and less on the public mask which people presented, along with all its trappings.

Similarly, in terms of manners, Erasmus stood against Medieval, knightly courtesy, but he also parodied the overly refined manners that were being established by the European aristocracy. Elias (2000) identified Erasmus's short treatise of the sixteenth-century 'On Civility in Children' as the moment when the term 'civility' received the specific meaning it still holds in the West.

The book concerns the art of educating young people, and Elias notes that, although Erasmus offers his deliberations with much seriousness, there is also a mocking and ironic tone. The book concerns 'outwards' behaviour – such as bodily carriage, gestures, dress, and facial expressions – which is seen as the expression of the 'inner' person. Erasmus proceeds to give examples of good manners or good grace, which are seen as central to the formation of good character. On the one hand, then, Erasmus criticises social displays in terms of manners that he understands to be overly refined and staged only to impress others, while on the other hand he praises manners that are the indication of a cultivated and intelligent person – qualities that indicate the true character of a person has been changed for the better, not only 'externally' but 'internally' as well.

What was truly radical about the humanists, and of the social changes they helped to bring about, was not just the idea of piety, self-discipline and ascetic self-moderation: it was also that they advocated the transition from external to internal social controls. Refinement of the invisible 'inner' world of selfhood was to be achieved through training and education. The private person is not born to her or his public duties: she or he must be educated into them. There is, however, controversy over the exact contribution made by the humanists in terms of the development of the notion of the 'inner' person and the reflexive relation to oneself. Strozier (2002) argues that in the sixteenth-century humanist tradition – including Erasmus – the self-relation disappears and is replaced by imitating the conduct of others. The emphasis is placed on self–other relations that form the milieu in which a person learns the competencies of courtly skills, virtues, and other modulations of the bodily self. However, this ignores the masked and veiled critique of overly refined courtly behaviour and also that, modifying Stoic philosophy, the humanists emphasised *self-discipline*. This marked a switch from the external to the internal control of behaviour in society, as it was now expected that individuals would control their own actions and gestures when among other people, without

the external threat of physical restraint to keep order. Furthermore, people achieved this through the reflective relationship they had with their own self, by which they monitored and judged their actions in specific social contexts, rather than through a simple behaviouristic learning of acceptable conduct. Instead, this had to be carefully judged and finely attuned to the situation in which the actor found him- or herself, something that could only be done by the close self-reflective modulation of feelings, thoughts and expressions.

Thus, the presentation of image and face became important in maintaining a person's character – as Erving Goffman (1959) was to point out about Western civilisation in the twentieth century – and any slip in this, any breach of good manners or *faux pas*, could threaten a person's reputation and standing (their 'moral career') leading to shame and embarrassment, or to the spoiling of public identity. In the duality between certain social expectations and their reconfiguration as psychological controls, there emerged the tension between what a person may really feel and the face they present to others, a situation which involves the control of those feelings. This moves the tensions between people onto that 'inner' plane, forming the modern 'psychological' attitude in which we look for the little nuances in looks, glances and gestures for a 'give away' as to what a person really thinks or feels.

What I have been stressing here, though, is the historical changes in power relations behind such a situation, which thinkers like Goffman do not refer to. Also, when Erasmus stressed the importance of self-discipline, he did so in order to argue for the full-forming of character through education and training; a character who can show all their virtues, only in a humble way. This, however, means that the humanists are not just concerned with interpersonal relations and behaviour, for they are also primarily concerned with the forming of an 'inner self' through education, discipline, and, eventually, self-discipline. As Foucault was to say about the institutional power of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, these disciplines worked not only on the body but on the 'soul': indeed, they worked to create

a 'soul' or self with its own sense of interiority and control of impulse.

As Charles Taylor (1989) has argued, we do not need to choose between the traditions of Augustine and Erasmus, the one stressing the 'inner' life, the other appearing to emphasise the importance of public conduct. We do not have to choose because together the two traditions have bequeathed to the modern West the elements in which (a) self-exploration, (b) self-control and (c) personal commitment above adherence to social conventions become important in the formation of self and, particularly, the modern sense that the interior self is the very core of our being.

## Adam Smith, the Scottish Enlightenment and Self-Identity

Taylor (1989) has also pointed out that many thinkers of the Enlightenment in the eighteenth century were influenced by the Erasmian tradition, especially those who stressed the naturalness of human benevolence and sympathy. In particular, the transmutation of Stoicism takes another turn in the work of Adam Smith, especially *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*. In that book, Smith argued that humans are moved to sympathise with the plight of others, to stand in others' shoes, and to understand what it must be like to live in and experience the situation in which others find themselves. We also expect others to identify with us in the same way. It is in this way that mutual identification with others is possible: but in the process we also get a view of our own selves from the perspective of others. Smith called this stance from which we can look back on our own selves the 'Impartial Spectator', as it is the view not from some *particular* other, but – as G. H. Mead would later say – from that of a *generalised* other. We then reflect on our own actions and impulses and attempt to control them, thinking how they will be judged by others. For Smith, this becomes the basis of self-mastery because it is only through regard for the opinions of others that we are motivated to restrain our own passions and exercise self-command. Therefore, we can see in Smith the

link back to Stoic thinking, with its emphasis on good public behaviour, only now the self plays a central part in this behaviour, as it is fundamental to the mutual identification that links self and other, which in turn is the basis on which people judge their actions in specific social situations.

Furthermore, unlike the ancient Stoics, Smith did not adopt the elitist view that self-mastery could only be attained through a relation to a philosophical teacher or, as with Erasmus, through the model of Christian virtue. Instead, everyone in society can be our teacher. This is why Smith valued commercial enterprise so highly, because it encourages interactions with a wider range of people from all different societies and walks of life, thus broadening the view we have of the world and of ourselves, as well as increasing the scope of the impartial spectator. In this position, though, we are divided into two parts, the spectator and the agent: the self who views itself constantly as if through the eyes of another, and the subjective self that is aware of its own thoughts and feelings, its impulses and sentiments, which move it to action. In this light, it is not surprising that many have noted the similarity between the Scottish moral philosophers and the symbolic interactionist perspective, particularly Serpe and Stryker (Chapter 10, this volume) and others (e.g. Costelloe, 1997) who forge the link between Smith and G. H. Mead. Smith's notion that, as selves, modern people are divided between the spectator and the agent is very similar to Mead's (1964) conception of the 'I' and the 'me'. Both also share the idea that we become individual selves only through seeing ourselves from the imagined perspective of others, especially from the standpoint of an impartial spectator or generalised other.

However, Smith is caught very much between a modern perspective on the self and the old struggles with established authority, especially the aristocracy. Like Erasmus, Smith notes that, in the courts of princes where success depends on favour, flattery and falsehood prevail over merit and abilities (1759/1966, p. 87). At least in commercial society, for Smith, people can begin to succeed because of their abilities rather than by currying favour. It is interesting to note that,

when Goffman refers to Smith, it is precisely on this point of how the aristocracy and the middle classes distinguish themselves. Whereas the middle classes establish their superiority over other classes by their knowledge, industry and self-denial, the nobility establish their rank in the performance of the minor activities of life, through which they express their character and power. As Smith says in a segment of text quoted at length by Goffman (1959, pp. 43–44), 'he [the nobleman] acts upon the most indifferent occasions, with that freedom and elevation which the thought of this naturally inspires. His air, his manner, his deportment, all mark that elegant and graceful sense of his own superiority, which those who are born to inferior stations can hardly ever arrive at' (Smith, 1759/1966, p. 75). Like Erasmus, Smith can barely conceal his contempt for the nobility and aristocracy in the ironic way these remarks are phrased, yet he no longer has to hide behind the mask of folly in order to make them. But the fact that Goffman can quote these sentiments 200 years later as an accurate description of the way that class superiority is still maintained through social performance shows that the observations still have contemporary relevance.[2]

There is, then, the ironic view of overly refined, upper-class performances evident in Smith's work in which authoritative or official behaviour is parodied, only now without need for the author to hide behind a mask to do so (as in the Renaissance). Still, this ironic stance is used by Smith to critique and unmask all that is seen as false in social life, only – to my knowledge – without the idea of the world as a stage. Nevertheless, Smith extends the Stoic idea that social actions require internal control or self-discipline, something that is given through the notion of the 'impartial spectator'. Thus, in Smith's work, the foundations are laid for the interactionist view that the private, reflective relation to oneself is inseparable from the ways in which others see us. This is the foundation of the social self, but one that also has a mute and invisible relation to the private self.

I therefore agree with Danziger (1997) that, in Adam Smith, we find a new form of power being expressed in his understanding of what

constitutes selfhood, in which the person, rather than the specific action, becomes the object of social control. However, Danziger sees the lineage of this idea emerging in the work of other philosophers of the Scottish Enlightenment, particularly John Locke, and ignores the other influences at work on Smith's ideas, particularly his debt to the older tradition of Stoic thought. It is true that, in the work of thinkers like Smith, the private self and the values on which self-evaluation rest are becoming more secularised, shorn of the religious notions of the immortal soul as that which defines the individual. However, I hope to have shown here that this notion of how people viewed themselves, prior to the eighteenth century, is too simplistic and that there was both continuity and change in the ways in which the private self slowly emerged and gained in importance in the life experience of individuals over the centuries of modern Western history.

## Discussion

In this chapter I have attempted to trace the social and historical roots of the type of identity construction common in the modern Western world, in which identity is thought to be synonymous with the possession of a unique and private self located 'inside' the person. I have traced the roots of this back to its beginnings in ancient Roman times when the idea of *persona* first emerged to indicate *both* the idea of the person as a mask put on in public *and* the innate right that one has to one's own personage as laid down for the first time in Roman law. However, in these ancient antecedents to the modern conception of self, in both Greece and Rome, it was argued that the idea of the person, both as mask and as having legal rights and duties, was largely a public construction, and only towards the end of the Roman Empire do written biographies appear that start to show persons relating to and addressing themselves in a private conversation that does not have to be shared with others, or to be expressed through some official form of self-accounting. This was, though, only a beginning and there is still controversy among commentators about

exactly when the modern idea and experience of selfhood appeared – where selfhood is understood and made sense of in terms of an 'inner' relation or conversation with one's own self. This private experience of being a person shows itself in the late Middle Ages and early Renaissance in Europe, especially in the work of humanists like Erasmus who began to critique official roles and statuses in public life, particularly among the high and mighty. Here we can see clearly the division emerging between public face and the roles of an individual and his/her private self or personal qualities, which may be at variance with the role he/she is playing. In a sense, one only becomes aware of playing a role on a stage like an actor when one can set against this public role a private self or conversation, from which position one can take a critical reflective stance on one's public persona. The notion of the 'self' as a private possession therefore has a long and complex history with roots in many varied philosophical and literary traditions that belong to different cultures, which themselves are expressions of the changing experiences of individuals: experiences of social life, power relations and of the self.

Indeed, as the work of Adam Smith demonstrated, experiences of the self can never be separated from social life, for it is in social relations and interactions that the psychological capacity for 'internal conversations' and, thus, for 'private' thoughts and feelings emerge. In this experience, individuals speak to themselves as they would to another, but in a 'private' dialogue that need not be heard by anyone else. Furthermore, it is through the eyes of others that the individual comes to evaluate her or himself, rather than through the values of religious doctrines. The understanding of identity as composed of both 'outer' and 'inner' experience, the latter seen as synonymous with the self, takes a new turn in Smith, yet it is an idea that has a long and complex history, and is not totally unconnected with what went before in ancient Greco-Roman thought.

Today, Smith's work has had the greatest impact on the symbolic interactionist approach, which stresses the way in which the human self comes into being and is sustained as a social process (see Serpe & Stryker, Chapter 10, this volume). In this view, it would be impossible for us to be reflective selves, aware of our own existence as an individual being and able to relate to ourselves as if to another person, had we not acquired this habit from the earliest years of life in social interaction with other persons. From that point onwards, the 'mind' develops as an internal conversation that one holds with oneself, which Mead (1964) famously described as the relation between the 'I' and the 'me' in which the 'I' speaks while the 'me' listens. The relation between these two aspects of the self constitutes the social self as a whole and creates the reactions of the person in the various social situations in which she or he must respond to others. In these situations we play different roles and thus obtain different images of our selves, which constitute the different images of 'me' that exist in our internal conversations.

However, since the 1960s this idea has been extended to understand persons more generally as role players, an approach made famous by Erving Goffman (1959) in particular. The idea here is that we are like actors on a stage playing different roles for an audience composed of our fellow social beings, putting on a face or appearance 'front stage' for those we are trying to impress while reserving other feelings and behaviours for 'backstage' areas where our intended audience cannot see us. This idea has recently been extended to other types of social performance, especially to styles of gender that are thought to be performed according to culturally prescribed rules or roles (see Bussey, Chapter 25, this volume). In this chapter, I have traced the historical emergence of this notion of self, as like an actor performing on the social stage, which goes back to the humanist tradition of the sixteenth century, in particular the work of Erasmus and Shakespeare.

One of the drawbacks of the contemporary interactionist approach, which takes the self to be a social performance staged for others, is that it fails to account for the fact that, unlike actors on a stage, our actions have consequences for the person who performs them, because we invest our own self in them in so many important ways.

But the question is this: What is the self that invests itself in these performances? If the self is seen only as composed from various social performances, it lacks psychological depth, with no conflict or struggles behind its performances. If, as Goffman claims, we invest our ego in our performances, how does this ego come into being? What seems to have been lost from the notion of the self as a social actor, as it developed from the 1960s onwards, is the kind of internal relation to the self that Smith and Mead saw as integral to the social self. This saves us from positing a presocial self or ego that exists prior to interactions and that invests itself in our roles or performances, for the private sense of self that feels to lie behind our public roles is nothing more or less than the internal conversation we hold reflectively with our self, speaking to our self as we would to another in a public conversation. Thus the self is social through and through but still has that sense of 'inner life' and psychological depth in which private doubts and contrary emotions can be articulated and felt, yet not automatically shared with others.

Along with identifying similar historical antecedents to symbolic interactionism as Serpe and Stryker (Chapter 10, this volume), my approach relates to others in this book in various ways. As I have noted above, the historical approach to identity construction allows us to create an understanding of a relational and social self, and I have developed this idea further elsewhere (Burkitt, 2008). Chen, Boucher, and Kraus (Chapter 7, this volume) add to such an approach showing how our relations to significant others provides a crucial basis for both stable and variable aspects of personality. Although my own approach goes beyond this to look at how we are located in broader aspects of social and historical relations, such as power relations in the late modern capitalist societies, the stance of Chen et al. is comparable in that I argue that power relations are always played out in various locales with a community of others. Furthermore, other ways in which power relations impact on our identities, such as how we develop a gender identity and sexual orientation that may be either in line with or at odds with societal norms, cannot be separated from the interpersonal and familial scenarios in which these deeply personal aspects of our being are formed. Indeed, both Chen et al. (Chapter 7, this volume) and Bussey (Chapter 25, this volume) touch on that here, where Bussey looks at how gender identity develops through the roles played within a culture with its various stereotypes of gender. However, the nonconformity to gender roles, mentioned by Bussey, is dependent upon the formation of a self that can come to understand itself as more than just synonymous with the public roles that it plays. In its own reflections, this self can understand that some roles are not entirely comfortable, and that somewhere in its development it has formed gender or sexual identifications that are perhaps out of line with what is expected in society. But the self that can understand and reflect in this way is not universally given as a product of invariable cognitive capacities: it is sociohistorically formed through the processes I have been describing in this chapter.

Again, this is true of the other capacities of modern selves. For example, I hope to have shown here the historical antecedents for narrative identity as described by McAdams (Chapter 5, this volume). These were to be found in the biographies and, later, the autobiographies that began to appear in the late period of the Roman Empire around 200 AD, particularly with the work of Marcus Aurelius, and then with Christian autobiographies, exemplified by St. Augustine's *Confessions* in 397 AD. In these works, individuals begin to tell the story of themselves not only in terms of their public works or achievements, but also in terms of their thoughts, feelings and 'inner struggles' as they relate these to their public and private selves in their writings. Even before this, though, we can see traces of a narrative self in the familiar letter as written by the Stoics to their teachers and friends. Similarly today, narrative selves relate to others by telling stories about those little everyday details and events that say so much about us, only now we do it through mobile phone calls and emails, as well as face-to-face conversations in coffee houses and bars. Through the myriad forms of mediation offered by modern communication systems,

the narrative self thrives. And this self relates not only to the image of itself as it exists in the present moment but, as Oyserman and James (Chapter 6, this volume) point out, it also relates to future images of itself – to what it wants to be. Such is the possibility of a reflective, narrative self.

Overall, the sociohistorical approach advocated in this chapter differs from other approaches in psychology, in particular cognitive ones, in that it does not assume that the ways we currently see identity and psychological processes are universally applicable. So, for example, in an ancient Greek drama such as Sophocles' 'Oedipus the King' (thought to have been written around 445 BC), a rich description is given of Oedipus' personality and characteristics and how these may well have led him to bring his tragic fate upon himself. However, as Edith Hall (1994, p. xxi) has noted in the introduction to her edited version of the play, 'the Greeks had none of the Christian cognitive machinery which lies behind, for example, Renaissance drama, a limited psychological vocabulary, and only an embryonic notion of the autonomous individual will'. This bears out what I have been saying in this chapter that such an idea of a 'cognitive machinery', or in my terms a reflective relationship to one's own self in which one can hold a conversation with one's self, only begins to appear in a recognisable form in the late Middle Ages and early Renaissance. The ability to converse silently with one's own self rests on the division between the public and private self, the role or performance and the 'inner' psychological being, and is a sociohistorical creation that emerges only under the influence of some of the trends I have been setting out here, in which our contemporary identities are constructed.

## Notes

1. For Bakhtin, the heteroglossia of contemporary discourse emerges within European nation states in the Middle Ages out of a growing awareness of other languages and cultures, and from the diversification within national languages that resisted attempts at unification. Heteroglossia is therefore an aspect of the centrifugal forces at work in nation states, constantly challenging the centripetal forces striving for a unified national language. The centrifugal forces are felt most strongly in the dynamic, quickly changing heteroglossia of everyday language and everyday life, which realises a multi-language consciousness. It is this heteroglossia of everyday life that the novel draws upon in its composition, and it is the multi-voiced consciousness of self and world it seeks to represent. This involves confession, in that private life, thought and feeling is its very stuff, but its central feature is the way it captures the heteroglossia of everyday language and life, with its internally competitive, and sometimes contradictory, forms of speech.

2. Smith's remarks foreshadow the work of Pierre Bourdieu (1984) on the *habitus* of the upper and middle classes being developed through their cultural capital and displayed in their tastes, lifestyle, speech and comportment.

## References

Augustijn, C. (1991). *Erasmus: His life, works, and influence*. Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press.

Augustine (397/1998). *The confessions* (M. Boulding, Trans.). New York: Vintage.

Aurelius, M. (170–180/1992). *Meditations* (A. Farquharson, Trans.). London: David Campbell Publishers.

Bakhtin, M. M. (1981). *The dialogic imagination: Four essays* (C. E. Holquist, Trans.). Austin, TX: University of Texas Press.

Baumeister, R. F. (1987). How the self became a problem: A psychological review of historical research. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *52*, 163–176.

Bourdieu, P. (1984). *Distinction: A social critique of the judgement of taste* (R. Nice, Trans.). London: Routledge.

Burkitt, I. (2008). *Social selves: Theories of self and society*. London: Sage.

Burnyeat, M. (1982). Idealism and Greek philosophy: What Descartes saw and Berkeley missed. *Philosophical Review*, *90*, 3–40.

Costelloe, T. M. (1997). Contrast or coincidence: George Herbert Mead and Adam Smith on self and society. *History of the Human Sciences*, *10*(2), 81–109.

Danziger, K. (1997). The historical formation of selves. In R. D. Ashmore & L. Jussim (Eds.), *Self and identity: Fundamental issues* (pp. 137–159). New York: Oxford University Press.

Elias, N. (2000). *The civilizing process: Sociogenetic and psychogenetic investigations*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Erasmus, D. (1511/1941). *The praise of folly* (H. H. Hudson, Trans.). Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Foucault, M. (1988a). Technologies of the self. In L. H. Martin, H. Gutman, & P. H. Hutton (Eds.), *Technologies of the self: A seminar with Michel Foucault* (pp. 16–49). Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Foucault, M. (1988b). *The care of the self: The history of sexuality* (Vol. 3). London: Penguin.

Gash, A. (1998). Shakespeare, carnival and the sacred: 'The winter's tale' and 'Measure for measure'. In R. Knowles (Ed.), *Shakespeare and Carnival: After Bakhtin* (pp. 177–210). Basingstoke: Macmillan.

Gill, C. (2006). *The structured self in Hellenistic and Roman thought*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Gill, C. (2008). The ancient self: Issues and approaches. In P. Remes & J. Sihvola (Eds.), *Ancient philosophy of the self* (pp. 35–56). Springer.

Goffman, E. (1959). *The presentation of self in everyday life* (1990 ed.). London: Penguin.

Hall, E. (1994). Introduction. In *Sophocles, Antigone, Oedipus the king, Electra* (pp. ix–xxxvi). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Harbus, A. (2002). The medieval concept of the self in Anglo-Saxon England. *Self and Identity*, *1*, 77–97.

Mann Phillips, M. (1949). *Erasmus and the northern renaissance*. London: Hodder & Soughton.

Mauss, M. (1938/1985). A category of the human mind: The notion of the person; the notion of self. In M. Carrithers, S. Collins, & S. Lukes (Eds.), *The category of the person: Anthropology, philosophy, history* (pp. 1–25). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Mead, G. H. (1964). The social self. In G. H. Mead & A. J. Reck (Eds.), *Selected writings* (pp. 142–149). Chicago: Chicago University Press.

Momigliano, A. (1985). Marcel Mauss and the quest for the person in Greek biography and autobiography. In M. Carrithers, S. Collins, & S. Lukes (Eds.), *The category of the person: Anthropology, philosophy, history* (pp. 83–92). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Remes, P. (2008). Inwardness and infinity of selfhood: From Plotinus to Augustine. In P. Remes & J. Sihvola (Eds.), *Ancient philosophy of the self* (pp. 155–176). New York: Springer.

Ricoeur, P. (1992). *Oneself as another* (K. Blamey, Trans.) Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Seigel, J. (2005). *The idea of the self: Thought and experience in Western Europe since the seventeenth century*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Smith, A. (1759/1966). *Theory of moral sentiments*. New York: Augustus M. Kelley.

Sorabji, R. (2006). *Self: Ancient and modern insights about individuality, life, and death*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Strozier, R. M. (2002). *Foucault, subjectivity, and identity: Historical constructions of subject and self*. Detroit, MI: Wayne State University Press.

Taylor, C. (1989). *Sources of the self: The making of the modern identity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Trilling, L. (1971). *Sincerity and authenticity*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Vygotsky, L. S. (1987). The collected works of L. S. Vygotsky: Problems of general psychology (N. Minick, Trans.). In R. W. Rieber & A. S. Carton (Eds.), *Thinking and speech* (Vol. 1). New York: Plenum Press.

Weber, M. (1905/1985). *The Protestant ethic and the spirit of capitalism*. (T. Parsons, Trans.) London: Counterpoint.