

Trust Generating Security Generating Trust: An Ethical Perspective on a Secularized Discourse

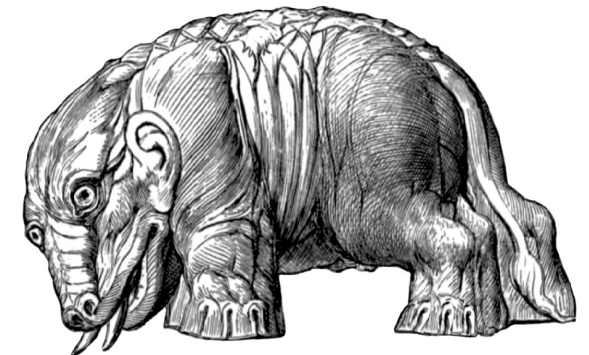
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Abstract:

This text focuses on the moral character of trust. Trust is widely recognized as a morally charged concept: Values are inscribed in this concept, and its practices have moral consequences. Trust needs ethical reflection to explore *what values* are inscribed and if the consequences are *desirable or welcome* and if *so for whom*. The first step reflects trust's religious biography, analyzing expressions of 'Gottvertrauen' in early modern times und drawing the line to Erik Erikson, Wolfhart Pannenberg and Konrad Lorenz. The second step considers security's underlying religious discourses, especially with the 'Schutzmantelmadonnen' (Madonna with the cloak) which provide an elaborate security technology. The idea of multiple modernities and multiple secularities explains how present some of the late middle age ideas are within modern technologies. In a third step, an ethics of trust – how to do trust and security in a just way – is mapped out with its crucial "points to consider" a field where different rationalities are present. The Coda finally rescues the reputation of the "trust and security theater" – as an ethically relevant and needed act and action.

Keywords: trust, security, ethics, justice

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Prologue

There seems to be a small controversy between Niklas Luhmann and the Merriam-Webster dictionary. Luhmann clearly distinguishes between ‘Vertrauen’ and ‘Zuversicht’ (Luhmann 2001, 147); Merriam-Webster tells us that trust and confidence are used (more or less) synonymously (<http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/trust>). For Luhmann, ‘Zuversicht’ is the more normal case insofar we all try to neglect the possibilities that our most regular expectations (that politicians will avoid war, the sky doesn’t fall on our heads, summer will come and no government agency will read my private mail) can be disappointed. ‘Vertrauen’, however, is an option within uncertainty. It is an option that, says Luhmann, I decide to choose (Reemtsma 2008, 38). There are, obviously, not only different cultures of trust but maybe also different cultures of conceptualizing trust. Let me for now take the dictionary at its diction, the Wörterbuch beim Wort. And if I do so, my favorite character in this context emerges: the conman, confidence man. He strikes a quite different figure from the German “Vertrauensperson” who would just boringly be an employee’s representative. Still worse, the V-Mann is an informant for the police and the national security.

There is, for example, James Hogue, born in 1959, who enrolled in Princeton University at age 29, claiming that he was an orphaned self-taught young man who had previously raised sheep and read philosophers in Nevada and is at the moment out of prison on parole (Samuels 2010). But there are not only those conmen who embraced a certain American way of life. We know about Victor Lustig, true to his name a charming, multi-lingual man born in Austria-Hungary in 1880 who sold the Eiffel Tower. Twice. And India’s most famous conman, known as Natwartal, sold the Taj Mahal. Thrice.

The first known usage of the term goes back to the 1840s when William Thompson was approaching obviously rich men in New York City, pretending they knew each other, starting a conversation and at one point saying “Have you confidence in me to trust me with your timepiece until tomorrow?”. (“Arrest of the Confidence Man”, *New-York Herald*, 1849 <http://chnm.gmu.edu/lostmuseum/lm/328/>) Or you can read Melville, whose last novel, “The Confidence Man” (1857/2009), which was inspired by William Thompson but tells another story about people sailing down the Mississippi on a steam boat called “Fidèle”, the passengers all victims or abusers of trust and confidence, a journey into America’s heart of darkness. The confidence man as conman, almost an archetype, inspires trust/confidence in order to abuse it.

“Have you confidence in me to trust me with your timepiece until tomorrow?” is a wonderful question. It shows how trust is linked to real or imagined relationships, how it thrives on social similarities, how it is linked to time, to the difference between “now” and “tomorrow”, how easily trust can be converted into money (or the lack of it) and how the timepiece in question does not only represent monetary value but also status – which is entrusted to some conman’s care. Trust is important and dangerous; important, because it facilitates social interaction on all levels; dangerous, because it can result in loss – loss of things, money, self respect or status; loss of optimism that is needed for social interaction as a whole; and, at worst, loss of trust, because social interactions based on trust always negotiate their own basis.

The conmen’s stories show that trust is not just a question of ambiguities; it is always also a moral issue. There are fault lines of “good” and “bad” running through it as well as fault lines between different notions what a “good” social environment on different levels is and should be.

As an ethicist, I will concentrate on this moral character of trust. To do this, I will focus less on typologies, systems and actors of trust. I will make use of a wide screen, putting spotlights on crucial aspects from the history of ideas concerning trust and security. At first, I will take a look at trust’s religious biography, then at security as a contemporary secularized discourse. Then I will ask if there could be such a thing as an ethics of trust – and how to do trust and security in a just way. At the end, in the Coda, I will try to rescue the reputation of the “trust and security theater”.

But allow me please to return for a moment to my prologue. Historian Ute Frevert describes trust as “an obsession of modernity” (Frevert 2013), a leitmotiv of specifically modern social interaction. Frevert might be right insofar there is a social and semantic extension of the concept of trust since the European 18th century that is developed along its increasing economization. This process can be read – with Frevert – as a concomitant phenomenon to the emergent society of citizens (Frevert 2013, 219) where individualization needs to be embedded in new forms of relationships and, in post-modern societies, where the world’s complexity needs to be reduced. Before this, trust was equally important for society, but contextualized differently.

In its social and semantic extension love and money seem to be the two main stages where at least modern plays of trust are enacted in a trust theater. Heiratsschwindler (marriage imposters, mostly conmen, not conwomen), main characters of the trust theater, who steal the contents of the bank account or the marriage chest and the heart, never became as famous as regular conmen

thieving without love. This might say something about societal values. And it says something about our neglect to recognize trust not only as an ambiguous and culturally diverse but also as a gendered concept. Today, *love* and *money* have to be accompanied and protected by *security*.

The conman is important, because he shows the flipside of discourses of trust: false trust, which can be false because it is faked or because it is clearly inappropriate; misused trust, which can be completely appropriate but the person or institution I put trust in uses this trust for other ends, mostly against the one who trusts; and distrust, a perspective on certain parts of the world or the world per se that refuses trust. With this notion of distrust, it makes sense to go back in history.

1. Trust's Religious Past

A 'Flugschrift' (pamphlet) from the year 1633 gives the warning "*Traw! Schaw Wem: einem Juden bey seinem Eyd / einem Krämer bey seinem Gewissen / Soldaten auf den Auen / dem Pfaffen bei den Frauen*" (Frevort 2013, 25). "If you trust: see whom: a Jew with his oath / a shopkeeper with his conscience / soldiers on the meadows / priests among women".

In the 17th century, *Fide, sed cui vide* functioned as a centerpiece of moral philosophy, sometimes even of a family's code of arms. Not trust, but distrust is the leading sentiment and stance when confronting the world. In early modern moral philosophy, this can be executed casuistically (like in the "*Traw! Schaw Wem*"-pamphlet), where different legal or moral cases are discussed in order to specify and establish the conditions for trust / distrust, heavily laced with the popular prejudice of the day. Or of the centuries. Or it can be understood in the context of doctrines of virtue where "truthfulness" and "keeping one's word" are basic virtues to generate other virtues. The ultimate problem of both approaches is the basic "conman problem": How to recognize 'real' and 'false' virtues and acts?

This 1633 leaflet advertising mistrust in trust has its own context that introduces actual trust on another level: mankind is to be distrusted. God alone deserves trust. The word 'Gottvertrauen' is at the foundation of discourses on trust. And at this point, trust is not only linked to God but also to security:

"Wer nur den lieben Gott lässt walten / und hoffet auf ihn allezeit / den wird er wunderbar erhalten / in aller Not und Traurigkeit / wer nur dem Allerhöchsten traut / der hat auf keinen Sand gebaut. [...]"

Sing, bet und geh auf Gottes Wegen / verricht das Deine nur getreu / und trau des Himmels reichem Segen / so wird er bei dir werden neu / denn welcher seine Zuversicht / auf Gott setzt, den verlässt er nicht.“ (Henkys 2001)

“If you will only let God guide you, / And hope in Him through all your ways / Whatever comes, He'll stand beside you, / To bear you through the evil days / Who trusts in God's unchanging love / Builds on the Rock that cannot move. [...]

Sing, pray, and swerve not from His ways / But do your part in conscience true; / Trust His rich promises of grace, / So shall they be fulfilled in you; / God hears the call of those in need, / The souls that trust in Him indeed.” (transl. by Catherine Winkworth, 1855)

This is a hymn written by Georg Neumark in 1641, toward the end of the Thirty Years' War, most famously adapted by Johann Sebastian Bach. It is a hymn with a beautiful and clear circular argument: trust generates security as proof that trust is a performance of the pious. If security does not materialize, then trust has not been strong enough or good enough. If everything goes well, then trust generates security generates trust. And so on.

There are multiple examples of this perfectly circular argument, some of them, like Luther's "*Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott, ein gute Wehr und Waffen*" / "A mighty fortress is our God, a sword and shield victorious", embedded in the collective memory of religious language and sounds. Luther's most popular hymn might have been some kind of a battle song against the Ottomans. It is a hymn of triumph, part of the first edition of "Des Knaben Wunderhorn" in 1805, deeply integrated in German culture by multiple musical adaptations by Bach, Händel, Richard Wagner, Max Reger, and by its parodies, e.g. in Bertolt Brecht's Hymns on Hitler (Hitler-Choräle; Brecht 1933 / 1967). This powerful image shows religion in an architectural setting: The metaphor for God is not only a house providing an (individual) home, but a fortress providing security, security from the enemy, security from malevolent attacks, deliverance from evil in all forms. Providing, however, that you accept the fortress and put trust in its stability. Here again we see the argumentative mantra, a catholic rosary, a Tibetan prayer mill going round in circles, making available mutually dependent necessities: trust and security.

With this base and background, it makes sense that theology, 400 years later and at the brink of what today we see as consequences of secularization, again centers on trust. Erik Erikson's basic trust, 'Urvertrauen' (1950), is reintegrated into religious belief. There, it slightly changes its appearance: 'Urvertrauen' in 20th century theology is first centered on the mother, but soon emerges as the topic of a religion-based developmental psychology. Trust, as e.g. Wolfhart Pannenberg says, has to be detached from the mother, who is only its temporary representative, and attached to God. God is the one who facilitates the process of identity formation; identity develops with trust and provides for security, and each act of trust is nothing but an actualization of an unlimited trust which can only be grounded in God (Pannenberg 2000, 159). Basic trust is the foundation of belief and from belief emerges the security of identity and life as a whole.

This naturalization and at the same time supernaturalization of trust comes easily for a certain line of religious thought – not only because Erikson's presumptions are quite plausible, but also because Erikson's setting is quite conservative, where girls are “naturally” obsessed with internal spaces and boys are “naturally” building towers (Erikson 1950/2005, 87f.) Here, images of gender and families are close to the images theology and religious settings of the time provide for the pious.

At the same time when Erik Erikson published his work on “Childhood and Society”, Konrad Lorenz, just recovering from having been a theorist of racial hygiene and finding himself in his new role as the director of the Max-Planck-Institut of Behavioral Science, published his research on imprinting and trust (Lorenz 1954). With all the delight over sweet little geese one question did not come up: If everybody can be a mother – what does this say on imprinting, on basic trust and on trust in God? From the perspective of Martina, the goose girl: was Lorenz the ultimate Conman? Disguised as ConMother? Standing in for God?

In contemporary discourses of trust, this religious past remains mostly invisible; but not without impact. In religious contexts, God was the ultimate base and bottom or bottom line of trust. If this disappears, trust becomes a bottomless concept, a concept that spirals endlessly with layer after layer after layer of trust. Because, especially in close and emotive relationships, there can never be enough trust. And there can never be enough proof for the never-enough trust.

The early twinning of security and trust in their religious context makes an awkward pair for post-modernity: Trust with this fuzzy emotional and religious background and security as a product of specific, rational contexts and conditions of production, against the backdrop of probability and risk

calculation that focus on agency, control and responsibility (Hacking 1990, 1975/2006; Bonß 1995; Porter 1995; Wolf 2010). A very happy long-lasting relationship seems rather unlikely. Security, however, has its own underlying religious discourses that seem to belong to the past.

2. Security as Secularized Discourse?

Within the European history of ideas, security has not always been connected to human agency – quite in contrast to contemporary rational or rationalized concepts of security. In many contexts in the pre- or early modern era, “security” presented itself as a metaphysical or specifically theological concept: “security” is given – by God, the gods, by nature or fate. This gift, however, like many gifts, might not be for free. It is often connected to a certain performance, the good deed or the right faith. Thus the simple distinction between security as a gift (once upon a time) and security as a product of human action (today) is perhaps a little too simple.

The European Middle Ages do not seem very productive for histories of security discourses. We normally concentrate on the fact that power is legitimized through granting physical security (e.g. on trading routes) (Kleinschmidt 2010; Nagenborg 2015). More interesting, however, are specific designs of security that we today would see not only as subjective but as irrational, which in their own contexts have their own rationality and logic.

Since the 13th century there are, for example, so called ‘Schutzmantelmadonnen’ in the Western Church, madonnas with a protecting cloak (Slump 2000). The Madonna spreads her cloak over those who are in need of protection while arrows are raining down from heaven, sometimes launched by Godfather Himself. In these cases, Mary, mother of God, protects mankind from God. The arrows often take on the meaning of ‘Pestpfeile’ – pestilence arrows (e.g. Simon von Taisten, 1460-1530, Pestbild in der Kapelle von Schloss Bruck; Slump 2000, 8-17). This cloak is a highly functional security technology, providing secure places for certain people. And, as it sometimes happens, this type of security has a regressive as well as sexualized element: people are not only small enough to fit under the Great Mother’s cloak; they are also somehow positioned under her skirt.

These ‘Schutzmantelmadonnen’ did not only function as altarpieces, where people kneeled and prayed. Believers also drew small Schutzmantelmadonnen on pieces of paper (or bought them), called ‘Pestzettel’, pestilence slips, which were blessed and carried on the body for protection.

Now we could diagnose a severe case of naiveté – after all, the Madonna’s coat does not “really” prevent the pestilence, not at all if it is a picture of a coat which is copied from another picture of a coat and carried in the own coat pocket. On another level, we see a complex act of security with its own rationality. This rationality is based on trust, and acts of security and acts of trust merge and become indistinguishable. This seems to be an early case of securitization of trust.

These pre-modern ideas and practices of security seem strange to us. But the contemporary symbol systems we use to think and calculate “secular” security are sometimes astonishingly similar, not only if we revive Ronald Reagan’s fantastical SDI-program. The argument that “security” is a strictly modern problem is based on the assumption that mankind, having lost God, has to provide for security by itself. Or: mankind, having lost God by installing themselves as rulers of the world, needs to take over the former God’s burden, which includes creating and distributing security (Sofsky 2005, 29; Kaufmann 1973/2003). This is not wrong, but it is not satisfactory either. The more interesting point is not the difference between pre-modern and late modern concepts – they are obvious; it is their (hidden) continuity. Late modern concepts of security tend to talk about risk, danger, certainties and probabilities and thus frame “security” in a certain rational way. The needs, hopes, wishes, expectations and promises connected with security are, however, still numinous – and that means: never ending, never enough.

Specifically, there are at least three main features which religion-based security practices share with “secular” ones: Firstly, inclusion and exclusion are intimately linked to security: who has access to the space under the cloak? Here, the categories of “good” and “evil” are crucial – “good” in the sense of pious or belonging or unobtrusive, unsuspecting, basically harmless; “bad” in the sense of infidel, foreign, conspicuous, suspicious and potentially dangerous. Secondly, security is not for free – you may have to pay in immaterial faith or in money or the currency of personal data. Trust is an advance payment; the currency could be the Pauline “sola fide”, faith alone, or a few good deeds and some money can enhance it. Between those who offer, demand, ensure, buy or accept and appropriate security, a complex power structure emerges which is deeply inscribed in both religious and secular security images. And thirdly, the willingness to make this advance payment is connected to a basic optimism where Leibniz’ “best of all possible worlds” has vanished but resurfaces in bits and parts with certain attitudes towards technologies of control and strategies to govern insecurities.

This strange overlap of different images can be explored with the help of secularization theories.

The common understanding of secularization describes closely linked processes of a decline of religiosity, functional differentiation in societies and privatization of religion; it has meanwhile lost much of its persuasiveness (Wohlrab-Sahr/Burchard 2011, 54). Or, as Koschorke puts it: The idea that European modernity is demythologized is one of the great myths of the European modernity (Koschorke 2013, 239). With regard to security, this means: “presecular” ideas of security are not simply replaced by scientifically reasoned, politically reflected, economically analyzed and personally acquired and executed ideas and practices of security. Different stages, levels, concepts and prioritizations do not simply replace each other but rather constitute a discursive and practical field. Within this field, these stages, levels or meanings merge, mix, exist in parallel, or alternate at taking the center stage.

Thus, security discourses in sciences and societies and resulting (or preceding) security actions are – especially in situations where there is some kind of existential urgency – not as “secular” as they seem to be. They are part of the “multiple modernities” (Eisenstadt 2000; for the whole discussion see Schwinn 2009) and carry with them, often obscured, a history where security was part of discourses of fate or faith. This means: Security as a product of specific, rational contexts and conditions of production, seen against the backdrop of probability and risk, exists not instead of but next to or maybe within security as a concept permeated with trust, saturated with emotion, in itself a special performance and payment of faith.

3. Can there be an Ethics of Trust?

Trust is widely recognized as a morally charged concept: Values are inscribed in this concept, and its practices have moral consequences. This is good to know, because it says something about the urgency and seriousness that is often connected with trust. It says nothing, however, about *what values* are inscribed and if the consequences are *desirable or welcome* and if so *for whom*. Here, the morally charged concept of trust needs ethical reflection.

At its very base, ethics is a theory of human action with the guiding principles of “good” and “bad”, “right” and “wrong”. Two basic questions are asked here: The question for the right action in conflicting situations and the question for what in antiquity was called the “good life” and more often than not is the question for a “good society”. Moralizing is not one of ethic’s tasks.

Roughly, we can distinguish between *four types and understandings of ethics*. The *first* and quite popular is an *ornamental understanding* of ethics where ethics is the icing on the cake. People and institutions call for ethics when everything is done: the political decision is made, the technical development implemented. Ethics then is no “must have”, but a “nice to have”, especially because it cannot do any real damage at this stage. A *second* understanding of ethics is an *instrumental understanding* – in the most simple form checking boxes which, in EU research for example, ask about informed consent, research on animals or embryos or data protection. Ethics in this sense remains strictly at the surface; it has no influence on the perception, definition or wording of the problem, but suggests that if you “pass”, everything will be all right. There is, *thirdly*, a *substantial instrumental understanding* of ethics, concerned with “orientation”. Here, ethics resembles a GPS making sure that, after a long and complex journey, you do not end up at a completely different place than you planned. Of course, one of the ethical tasks is to give orientation to prevent you from losing your way. A GPS, however, is relatively simple: you know where you are, you know where you want to go and you look for the shortest way in between. But we often know neither the one nor the other – and the shortest way may not be the best. It is then and *fourthly* necessary to develop a *non-instrumental understanding* of ethics. Ethics framed like this refrains from cookbook recipes – in this case: take the following values, stir until smooth and in case of doubt gratinate with cheese. This is dangerously simple. Ethics, from its very beginning in antiquity, seemed necessary because life could not be lived and shaped solely with reference to traditions, authorities, habits and customs. Traditions, authorities, habits and customs are the basic immaterial securities of life. Ethics in a non-instrumental way critically reflects on these securities, their often implicit presuppositions and their moral acceptability or inacceptability. This means: In some, relatively clear points, especially where basic human rights are at stake, ethics argumentatively supports what most of us most of the time know is right. In the full sense of its meaning, ethics questions basic, seemingly self evident and natural “truths” and thus generates insecurities.

Instrumental as well as non-instrumental levels of ethical reflection are necessary and justified. But there is the strong need to balance instrumental and thus security producing efforts with non-instrumental and insecurity generating understandings of ethics. An ethics of trust in an instrumental understanding might aim at developing criteria for trust. There, it follows up on casuistic or virtue ethics approaches, which we already saw in the “Traw! Schaw Wem”-pamphlet. The problem

remains the same: We could come up with the trustworthiness of an actor as criterion for trust; this is a limited benefit, intellectually and practically. As soon as we need to contextualize acts and actors of trust, we leave the level of instrumental deliberation.

On a non-instrumental level, ethics poses two main questions. The first is the question of ambivalence. If threatened by new societal or technological developments, traditional concepts tend to be seen as “good”. The threat of loss leads to renewed appreciation. At least for cultural pessimists, this happens to trust, and the quest for a cultivation of trust within society, politics or marketing is quite loud. Trust then can be seen either as intrinsic virtue or value, or as virtue or value because it produces other goods. This is understandable on several levels, one being Jean Améry’s exemplary account of losing the ability to trust, the basic “Weltvertrauen”, trust in the world, through torture (Améry 2008, 168).

Trust, however, is necessary and still not intrinsically “good”. I name just three dangerous characteristics of trust:

Trust can be highly manipulative – in the case when new strategies, technologies and mechanisms engender a sense of trust, that can easily be used for other ends and interests. This happens in all segments of society, not only where women’s income and a teenager’s curfews are at stake.

Trust can negate differences: Living within social inequalities, defensive alliances against those who are “not trustworthy” develop easily (Reemtsma 2008, 30). Not for nothing, as Jan Philipp Reemtsma says, are families and gangs the nucleus of trust; they can love or hate each other, but they are the social model for normality and continuity. Here as well as on the macro level, the crisis of confidence can be solved by exclusion. Or execution. (ibd., 327-453)

Trust can be bound to violence: The state’s monopoly on the use of force creates different zones of permitted and non-permitted force. Trust in modernity relies on the stability of these zones. The “modern enemy”, however, as Reemtsma points out, is the “enemy of modernity”: the barbarian. If you declare someone is a barbarian, you allocate him or her to the zone where violence is – still – permitted and often advisable. Thus the German Nazi society as Reemtsma describes it switched from the normality of trust in non-violence to trust in violence: If the world is sustained by violence, trust is transformed and appears as trust in violence. (ibd., 433-451)

The second ethical question is concerned with the twinning of trust and security in circular arguments. We are well acquainted with these circular arguments – trust generating security generating trust – from religious histories, political propaganda and everyday knowledge. Everyday knowledge can be dangerous, especially if we overlook or negate inherent power structures, inequalities and asymmetries that are hidden within this mantra and that could provide trust and security – but at the price of injustice. Discourses on trust and discourses on security have to undergo (Siamese)-twin-surgery; they have to be separated in order to find reasonable, nonviolent and just ways to establish a relationship between them. Acts of trust have to be separated from acts of security in order to recognize the emotional need for Madonna's cloak and the fact that smart CCTV systems do not provide for it. Security against terrorist attacks is different from trust in democratic institutions. Both might have to come together at a certain point but cannot be presented as the same discourse, the same act and the same societal need. This leaves us with the question:

4. How to do Security and Trust in a Just Way?

It might be an ethical goal to describe structures, systems and positions that allow acts of trust that do no harm. It is, however, *not an ethical goal to reestablish trust*. The ethical question is not how to enable people to incorporate the virtue of trust. The ethical deliberation is concerned with the way individual and socio-political acts and demands of trust are structured, contextualized, framed and embedded. It analyzes underlying violence and hierarchies, insecurities and promises of security that form the landscapes where trust is requested, enacted, established and lost; landscapes shaped by insecurities and promises of security, by hierarchies and sometimes by violence. If these landscapes show dominant forms of pressure, violence, invariable hierarchies, incapacitation or just an overall paternalistic streak, every proponent of trust is a conman. Ethics analyzes the often implicit preconditions, attitudes and underlying ideologies of social and political practices. Here, the attention shifts to asymmetrical relationships of trust that are gendered, infused with emotion and penetrated with power, the most stubborn of the metaphysical heirs. It is necessary to deliberate on contexts that need trust and on context that need distrust in the form of regulation and control. Where democracy can be seen as institutionalized distrust (Sztompka 1999, Endreß 2002, 77-80), many of the actual trust-related topics (privacy and digital security, for example) need criteria for

institutionalized distrust more than they need trusted and trusting users, customers and citizens. In most cases, most places on these landscapes, there are hybrid situations – a certain level of trust enables me to distrust, demanding regulation and control.

How to do security and trust in a just way? In complex situations, landscapes and cases, ethics won't produce unequivocal rules, rules you just have to follow and life will be good. More often than not, an ethical speech act is different. Ethics will put "points to consider" on the agenda of doing security and trust. These "points to consider" are no boxes to check and no GPS to follow; they mark issues that we have to be mindful of if we aim at doing trust and security in a just way. I will name three of these points to consider:

Ambivalence of trust: Trust is necessary and dangerous. It is an ethical task to consider contexts, structures and interests that bring forth manipulative, hierarchical, excluding or violent forms of trust. Trust as a morally charged concept has to be examined for the values that are inscribed and the consequences they induce for whom.

Madonna's cloak and the mantra of "trust generating security generating trust": Both trust and security are concepts saturated with religious pasts, which are not simply past. It is necessary to consider the different rationalities they present, to limit the concepts' claims for absoluteness and to separate discourses of trust and discourses of security – in order to design and shape their reconnection in a just way.

Conmen: Trust can be false and abused, resulting in losses of security on different levels. It is necessary to consider the role of distrust for discourses on trust, the need for institutionalized distrust in order to generate trust and the need to recognize and react to hybrid forms of trust.

Coda: Trust and Security Theater

Security Theater has a bad reputation: "Security theater refers to security measures that make people feel more secure without doing anything to actually improve their security." (Schneier 2009). It "looks impressive but doesn't do much good" (Felten 2004). "Theater" is used pejoratively: It is seen as a fraudulent representation to appease and quiet the citizens, just a variation of the opium for

the masses. It is nothing more than a lie. “Theater” here is presented in its most simplified version where in a puppet show like the German ‘Kasperletheater’, Kasper, the crocodile and the devil act in the name of some black pedagogy and need, in security contexts, the grandmother as an extra and example of vulnerability.

“Theater” is more than that. It is more than an emotional experience to prevent people from thinking. “Theater” has its unique place within the world’s cultural histories where interactions between those who play and those who watch (as accomplices or in critical distance) can generate a form of catharsis; theater is able to integrate its own religious origin and possible political purposes. It is able to develop ways to realize and visualize life, to reject and appropriate judgments and to suggest change – changes in how we see moral attitudes and how we perceive moral conditions.

“Hamlet” (Shakespeare 1603) is one of the most powerful plays in Western theater. In the first act, we as spectators hear: “Be wary then; best safety lies in fear.” (Hamlet I, III). It is Laertes who advises his deeply unsettled sister Ophelia about matters of love – which, of course, are politically tinted. “I do not know, my lord, what I should think”, Ophelia tells her father – because it is difficult for her to assess Hamlet’s professions of love. And Polonius, the father, is quite clear: “Think yourself a baby.” Here again, trust and security overlap and Polonius and Laertes insist that (at least for Ophelia) security is bound to her ‘Unmündigkeit’, which is the mental, as well as the legal and the moral immaturity. ‘Unmündigkeit’ is enclosed, fenced and thus stabilized by fear. We know how this ends in “Hamlet”: badly. And of course there is one or another Laertes and Polonius in our social or political discourses on security and trust – be it a person or a system. This strategy has a subtitle: “Sub tuum praesidium confugimus”, “under thy protection we seek refuge”, and brings us back to the Madonna with her cloak.

Shakespeare does nothing else than trust and security theater, and Schneier wouldn’t do it better. It is, however, trust and security theater within the theater, and Shakespeare is the expert for theater within the theater. This means: trust and security theater within the theater performs approaches to and attitudes towards trust and security and its consequences: feigned madness turns into real societal madness and in the end (almost) everybody is dead. Not the spectators. They might have felt and understood something.

And this is the trust and security theater we need, and ethics could bring forth. Ethics is not only about suggesting, endorsing, rationally justifying or prescribing the good or right practice. It is also

about the language and the categories that are used to promote action and thus are instruments of power. Ethics is an instrument to critically examine and reexamine the sometimes ideological subconscious that underlies the use of language and the use of categories. The theater in ancient Greece was a cultural way to “see” (theáomai) and participate, and thus integral part of Greek citizenship. Performances on the legal or political stage were seen in analogy to theatre: politics are performance, and performances are politics, and this perspective reveals the underlying mechanisms in politics. (Goldhill; Osborne 1999) Claiming this tradition, ethics aims to be “theater”, critically reflective and critically reflecting language, categories and mechanisms that seem “natural”, “unavoidable”, “without alternative”, and thus a (mostly intellectual, but sometimes also narrative and emotive) “theater” that reveals the “theater”. In this sense, a new security theater is not a fake, not fraudulent representation; not playing something that is not real. It is the possibility to frame this pretension of security or trustworthiness, to change the perspectives, show it in its consequences and thus to provide the chance to understand it, to judge it, and, hopefully, sometimes to change it.

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