

## MacIntyre on Personal Identity

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**Abstract.** MacIntyre's interpretation of human life is influenced by the medieval conception, which considers the human to be substantially *in via*. What allows MacIntyre to maintain that there is a specific "narrative unity of human life" is the conception of life as "quest" or "journey". Thus, the self is tied up to a character and his/her unity is given as the unity of the character which is demanded by the narration. The construction of personal identity revolves around the question "what is a good life?", adopting a structured narration as a basis for the formation of personal identity. Nevertheless, although the unity of life demands an end, the recognition of the fact of pluralism averts MacIntyre from any effort to define positively what is good. However, given the fact that the possibility of understanding life is intertwined with a specific time, place and civilization, the quest does not blindly move in a vacuum, but within traditions, since we are bearers of a specific story. I will argue that (a) as long as the notion of the end remains bereft of content, its capability of solving conflicts of values becomes weaker, (b) in this context, the problem of the coexistence of individuality and social determination is raised.

**Key words:** personal identity, practice, narrative, moral tradition, modernity, individualism, autonomy, community, teleology.

MacIntyre's theory is part of a wider discussion about the content, the limits and the perspectives of Modernity, which acquires the character of a conflict that revolves around conceptual pairs such as substantial/procedural ethics, ideal of good life/rules of fair coexistence, teleology/deontology, communitarianism/liberalism. *Vis-à-vis* the question that concerns the possibility of inducing a universal core out of the pluralism of valid forms of life, the principal tendency of modern ethics argues that the claim of universality requires detachment of the contents associated with the ethos of specific communities. The questions about life are posed as a matter of responsibility of the socialized individuals, judged through the perspective of each one of them.

MacIntyre's updated account of the virtues works as a critique of the abstract character of modern ethics in favour of an orientation towards the communal ethos. First it is a critique of individualism, which conceives the individual, that is a physically discernible and psychologically continuous rational and autonomous subject, as the basic ethical unit, ultimate source of value and bearer of justification. For MacIntyre, the human individual has an inherent complexity which the individualistic point of view is unable to conceive. The modern self cannot be held responsible in the way that pertains to a moral subject, as s/he faces alternative ways of life from an external point of view, provided that ex hypothesi it does not have any commitments. Nevertheless, its conflicting desires are unable to comprise a base of choice and, as a consequence, it cannot form a rational history in its movements from one state of moral commitment to another. The subject, if no definitive teleology is presupposed, i.e. a notion of what is good, definable by communal or species needs, lacks a guiding thread. The capability for practical reason is not abstract, is not understandable outside a social (*After Virtue, Whose Justice? Which Rationality?*) or biological

(*Dependent Rational Animals. Why Human Beings Need the Virtues*) framework. In the present article I am going to discuss the early historical-social approach of the philosopher.

According to MacIntyre, moral theory is today in a state of disorder, as it emerges as a mass of conceptual fragments that have survived from the past, though detached from the wider viewpoint with which they were connected and, hence, lacking the context from which they derived their meaning (MacIntyre 1985, 2, 110-11, 256, 257).<sup>1</sup> Modern culture suffers from the loss of a normative order, a loss that the philosophy of the time reproduces in theory and, as a consequence, the solution of moral problems on the level of social practices is rendered impossible. MacIntyre's diagnosis concerns Modernity as a whole, given the fact that the confusion does not concern just theoretical, philosophical approaches, but life as a whole, individual and collective, firstly around matters of ethics and secondly around matters that concern truth and rationality. Post-enlightenment culture is deflected towards emotivism on the theoretical level and towards bureaucracy on the level of social-political practice.<sup>2</sup> Under that second aspect, modern society constitutes an exemplary form of alienation.<sup>3</sup>

MacIntyre argues that in terms of modern and contemporary ethics, moral judgments cannot be characterized as being true or false, as it is accepted that these express simply subjective feelings or attitudes of the speaker, contrary to the judgments over facts, which have an objective meaning, as they are empirically verifiable. Since moral judgments cannot be justified by rational criteria, they are faced as objects of an arbitrary choice. Thus, the relation of the self to his/her ends lies in a free act of will, like transportation from one moral point of view to another. This is an approach of cosmopolitanism without roots, in the centre of which MacIntyre tracks down an impoverished conception of the self and the society, a homeless individual which is potentially everything and in reality nothing (MacIntyre 1988, 339). And he holds that in this capability of the self to avoid any necessary identification with any particular moral point of view or social role, modern philosophy detects mistakenly the essence of moral subjectivity (MacIntyre 1985, 31). MacIntyre suggests that the shadowy figure of the person, as sketched by Modernity,

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1] See MacIntyre's "disquieting suggestion", *op.cit.*, 1-5. The understanding of modern ethics in terms of fragments first appeared in E. Anscombe 1958, pp. 1-19. With regard to MacIntyre's view, see Begley 1995, 221-23, Garcia 2003, 94 ff., Haldane 2005, 92-93, Kelly 2005, 128.

2] The term emotivism in the work of MacIntyre functions as a wider hypothesis, so it does not coincide with the specific metaethical theory of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. So, when MacIntyre puts under that flag different philosophical stances, from Hume to Nietzsche, Stevenson or Sartre and Weber, he is not referring to a specific theory but to the current incapability of rational justification in ethics, which is a necessary product of the acceptance of the basic thesis that evaluative propositions are matter of preference. For MacIntyre this is not the point of view of some specific philosophical school, because the liberal individualism, which is responsible for this, has affected even the philosophical programs that are supposed to be contrary to it, like Marxism.

3] The surface of emotivist society is about freedom. But on a deeper level there are functioning manipulative relations, since the individual is under the power of elites formed by the three central modern characters: the rich Aesthete, the Manager and the Therapist.

is deprived of crucial qualities which are traditionally connected with the idea of moral personality, receiving thereby an abstract and pale character and indeed in a way that puts into question the continuity and the identity of the subject. As a matter of fact, it is formed through the loss of traditional bonds that used to structure the social identity and the view of human life as an order towards a specific end (MacIntyre 1985, 33-34).

According to MacIntyre, the Enlightenment inherited a complex combination of ancient Greek elements, in conjunction with assumptions of medieval Christendom, but the teleological aspect, the teleological understanding of human life, was lost in the historical process. Nevertheless, the teleological worldview of the lost ancient and medieval world incorporated a unity of metaphysical, epistemological and ethical presuppositions. MacIntyre aims at the reactivation of the ethical content, without, however, retaining its overall epistemological and metaphysical presuppositions. He substitutes the notion of History for the notion of Nature, aiming at the construction of an objective teleology, which will not be loaded with a specific conception of human nature or essence and will not presuppose an agreement on a common conception of the good.

MacIntyre develops the meaning of "virtue" in three stages (MacIntyre 1985, 186-87): (1) "practice", (2) "narrative unity of human life", (3) "moral tradition". Centered upon a specific "practice" and the "internal goods" that determine it, the participants form stories that give meaning to their life.<sup>4</sup> These "narrations" weave themselves together, in order to form a concept of a human end, which is the driving force of a "tradition", that is a wider cultural narration which functions as a basis of justification on the individual and the social level, so that the separate actions are judged according to their cohesion to or their deviation from this wider complex of values.

MacIntyre's interpretation of human life is influenced by the medieval conception, which considers the human to be substantially *in via*. What allows MacIntyre to maintain that there is a specific "narrative unity of human life" is the conception of life as "quest" or "journey". The unity of life does not lie upon the chronological arrangement of facts but is rather characterized in terms of a literary work, it has a dramatic form. The unity of the self is based upon the unity of a narration which connects birth to life and to death, as in the context of a dramatic play the beginning is connected to the middle and to the ending (MacIntyre 1985, 205; 1990, 198). Human beings have a responsibility for the history of which they are the authors, whereas human expression renders itself comprehensible only when it finds its position within a specific narrative (MacIntyre 1985, 209). Thus, it should not be assumed that the person occupies a specific static or fixed position, but just that s/

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4] "Internal goods" of a practice are the goods that cannot be identified and attained in any other way than by the experience of participating in the practice in question. On the contrary, "external goods" are those goods externally and contingently attached to a practice, that is there are always alternative ways for achieving them. For example, strategic capacity is an internal good to the practice of chess playing. Fame or wealth on the other hand is external goods, because there are always alternative ways of achieving such goods and their achievement does never depend only on the engagement in that particular kind of practice (MacIntyre 1985, 188 ff.).

he is situated in a specific point of the journey towards the attainment of her/his end. The narrative unity of life is teleological, since it presupposes the ability to evaluate in terms of success or failure the search for a conception of the good, the history of which surpasses the individual (MacIntyre 1985, 34).

The human in practice, as in his/her fictions, is in fact a “story-telling animal”. I can answer the question “what to do?” only if I have previously answered the question “which history or histories I am part of?” According to MacIntyre, listening to stories about bad step-mothers, lost children, deceived kings, children learn the meaning of relevant roles, they recognize the characters of their personal drama and they understand the world. Through the myths and the fairy-tales of childhood, the child finds a way of handling a chaotic world. The weight of the myth is later taken over by philosophy. According to MacIntyre, there is no way of comprehending any society, including ours, if we do not try to do it through its initial dramatic sources (MacIntyre 1985, 216; 2006, 7-8).

The subject functions as a writer and an actor at the same time. What we can say and do is deeply affected by the fact that we are never something more than co-writers of our narrations. Only in our imagination do we live the story which we like. We do not begin *ab initio*, we are inserted in a stage of the story which we have not planned, and we become part of an action which we did not initiate. We are restricted by the actions of others and by the social environment (MacIntyre 1985, 215). Each one of us is the basic character of his/her own drama and plays secondary parts in the dramas of others, while each drama sets limits to others. Thus we are not autonomous writers, since we are protagonists of our own story, but at the same time, part of the stories of others. We are characters of a parallel series of intermerging narrations, some of which are often integrated in others, as for example, it can happen with Mary Stewart’s life in that of Elizabeth’s I. In that way the narrative conception of the self is formed. The subject is what s/he is justifiably considered by others to be for the duration of the story that he/she unfolds from his/her birth to his/her death (MacIntyre 1985, 213, 215, 217).

The conception of the narrative unity of life involves, first, an ontological dimension, in the context of which priority belongs to the society, since the character is defined by the social construction of individuals, their self-understanding within a specific social structure. Second, a normative dimension, in the sense that it is constitutive not only of the experiences, but of the person as well, of his/her identity and continuity as a bearer of these experiences. And third, an historical-social dimension, which implies the continuity of life in time and is integrated in a wider story, in the sense that it is constitutive of the social structure and the groups that are formed in its frame, elements which also have an inherently narrative character.

However, what does the unity of individual life consist in? MacIntyre does not try to base personal identity upon the psychological continuity of the self, nor its lacking upon his/her discontinuity. Personal identity is the identity that is demanded by the unity of the narration’s character, since, without unity of this form, there can be no subjects with narratable stories. Thus, the self is tied up to a character and his/her unity is given as

the unity of the character which is demanded by the narration. According to MacIntyre, this is about the unity of a narration incarnated in a single life (MacIntyre 1985, 217-18). The construction of personal identity revolves around the major question “what is a good life?” adopting a structured narration as a basis for the formation of personal identity. In this context, MacIntyre’s critique of emotivism is about the loss of an end, which provides life with an order and a goal, setting limits, social frame and standards, so that life can be evaluated. In post-enlightenment culture, moral judgements, unable to be graded according to a specific supreme end, simply express equally valid preferences.<sup>5</sup>

By the introduction of the concept of “narrative unity of life”, MacIntyre seeks to solve the problem of choice among different “practices”. As the “internal goods” of various practices are not ordered according to their value, the choice among them is made according to the conception of the end of human life as a narrative unity. Otherwise, we would face the problem of an arbitrary choice, without any criteria, which characterizes emotivism. The understanding of human life as a narrative unity renders its confrontation possible, not as an expression of arbitrary will, but as a field of self-expression that provides elements regarding its own content.

Thus MacIntyre blames modern culture because, by abandoning teleology, it is unable to indicate ends that aim towards the moral perfection of man, understood as self-realization. MacIntyre’s work is an effort to approach the human subject in relation to the achievement of a specific end, which gives to human practices a perfectionist character, by forming the criterion according to which human life will be judged as a whole. The self emerges as a subject of a narration, which is bound together by a sovereign idea of the good, aspiring to authenticity, to the fulfillment of the truth that is connected with the achievement of the human end, and implies the moral perfection of the self, by means of exercising the proper virtues.

The notion of authenticity sets limits to the continuous re-definition of identity, which are dictated by the integration of the subject into a specific precedent moral frame, which is not of his/her own making. MacIntyre’s critique is centered upon the thesis that

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5] According to MacIntyre, Aristotelian teleology is based on a crucial distinction between “man as it is” (ἐνεργεία) and “man as it could be if his telos is realized” (δυνάμει). Aristotelian ethics presupposes (MacIntyre 1985, 53): (a) a conception of the human nature as it is in its untutored state, (b) a conception of the human nature as it would be when its “end” (τέλος) is realized, (c) a conception of practical reason and ethics as a means of the transition from the first to the second state. Ethics is the science which can understand and guide this transition, because it signals the road which leads to the realization of true human nature, e.g. the realisation of the human telos through the cultivation of virtues (op.cit., 52). Due to the abandonment of teleology during modern times, the concept of the good (ἀγαθόν) is deprived from any factual information and is relegated to a simple sentiment. But it is precisely the concept of the human telos that justifies the movement from “factual” to “evaluative” judgments, from “is” to “ought,” that is the transition from empirical premises to evaluative judgements (op.cit., 57). With his theory of man as a “functional concept,” MacIntyre aims at confronting the problem of the naturalistic fallacy. Functional concepts concern things that due to their construction or beings that due to their nature are destined to perform a specific function. Since their destination is the fulfilment of purposefulness, they will be judged in terms of this purpose which constitutes their destination.

the critical liberation which is connected with the ideal of autonomous choice leads to a loss of moral orientation. In this context he recognizes the capability of reason, but he holds that this presupposes a precedent complex of commitments for an evaluation of right and good to be possible. Thus, it cannot be regarded as a capability of detachment from the historically fixed practices of evaluation.

In this way a wider cultural background of common knowledge and historical memory is formed, from which the subject draws objective moral criteria and the elements that allow the formation of his/her personal story. The very stories that s/he forms, inevitably bound up with the frame of the social union to which the subject belongs, in a way that the historical and the social identity eventually coincide. So, when moral language collapses to the conditions of disorder linked to emotivism, man can neither find common meanings on an individual level, meanings that would allow him/her to get individualised, nor can the political community express the moral community of citizens in a certain common program on a collective level.

By the introduction of the notion of tradition, criteria of excellence are being defined, which are meant to function as markers in the narrative process of the subject, so that s/he can manage to handle the various particular goods of the practices that have been historically formulated. Thus, whereas on the one hand the understanding of human excellence is open to changes, on the other hand it is defined by the authorities of a specific historical time. That means that, first, this understanding does not concern the unfolding of a specific context of human nature, of some substance, and it does not stem from a timeless definition of this nature. Second, it is not a matter of an arbitrary choice, in the manner of emotivism. For this reason, the rejection of traditions constitutes a major problem for liberal individualism.

Individualism ignores the social integration of the human end and for this reason it refers to isolated choicemakers, incapable thus of giving a coherent ideal of the good life. From this point of view, I am what I choose to be. I can always, if I want to, put into question these elements that are regarded as merely random social characteristics of my existence (MacIntyre 1985, 220). On the contrary, for MacIntyre, the conception of the good has a social dimension, since it is inherently and indissolubly linked with the nature of a given historical society, which limits the way in which the individual conceptions about what is good are formed. The self, in the final analysis, consists in the social roles which s/he inherits.

Thus, the definition of the identity of the subject includes elements descriptive of the roles s/he plays: "But it is not just that different individuals live in different social circumstances; it is also that we all approach our own circumstances as bearers of a particular social identity. I am someone's son or daughter, someone else's cousin or uncle; I am a citizen of this or that city, a member of this or that guild or profession; I belong to this clan, that tribe, this nation. Hence, what is good for me has to be good for one who inhabits these roles. As such, I inherit from the past of my family, my city, my tribe, my nation, a variety of debts, inheritances, rightful expectations and obligations. These constitute the

given of my life, my moral starting point. This is in part what gives my life its own moral particularity.” (MacIntyre 1985, 220)

What happens, though, when the same person is part of more than one conflicting practices and traditions? And on what basis can there be a quest for the social good in societies which are fragmented and conflicting? Modern ethics, by transferring the emphasis upon the rules, tries to confront the problem of human coexistence in the context of an “open”, pluralistic society, when, that is, people cease to define themselves according to a common conception of the good and their society is not any more held together through the strong bonds of a community. The demand for autonomy liberates from the hierarchical structures of the past, no matter whether they stem from the secular or from the religious power. It substantially concerns the guarantee of a frame, within which everyone seeks his/her good, a good which should remain indefinable from a public point of view. Provided that he recognises it, MacIntyre should too confront the same problem.

MacIntyre has to show how the notion of the end, which differentiates itself from person to person, can be connected with a wider sense of the end for human beings, so that the constitution of a narrative unity can become possible and the life as a whole can have a direction. Nevertheless, although the unity of life demands an end, a predefined way of life that determines its conditions, the recognition of the fact of pluralism averts MacIntyre from any effort to define positively what is good. However, we notice that as long as the notion of the end remains bereft of content, its capability of solving conflicts of values becomes weaker, as it is rendered conventional in a frame of heterogeneous practices and traditions, and as a result the concept of the quest remains accordingly undefined and, hence without a guiding line, especially with respect to the probability of the function of conflicting and possibly evil practices and traditions.<sup>6</sup>

The systematic posing of the question “what is the good life?” receives different answers, which probably diverge from the true good or the common good. Thus, there is an indetermination of the quest, the exact nature of which remains undefined, since its end is not defined.<sup>7</sup> Under which conditions, though, is it possible to construct a teleology without defining the notion of an end? And how can we know that our end is true?

First, we have to recognize that MacIntyre locates a real problem when he delineates the question of a meaningful life in Modernity, suggesting that the ideal of autonomy has no meaning, if it concerns an empty notion of freedom. The commitment to autonomy, which entails that there can be no external imposition of a specific conception of the good on the individual, can function only as a necessary, but negative, condition of existence. The free individual remains without a guiding line in life. It is indeed necessary to assure both the cognitivist claim in the field of ethics and the possibility to articulate a discourse

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6] See the paradigm of Nazism in MacIntyre 1985, 179-80. The problem of evil practices is posed by several critics, see, between others, S. Feldman (1986, 310ff.). Especially from a feminist point of view, see Frazer & Lacey 2005, 273ff. and *passim* with further bibliographical references.

7] About the need to determine the concept of the end, see also Frankena 1983, 585, Downing 1984, 43 ff., Kitchen 1997, 81 ff. Cf. Miller 1984, 55-56.

about the content of life. His approach is flawed as far as its positive side is concerned, as it hesitates to identify positively the conception of the good. Of course the requirement is not a final theory of the good. To demand that MacIntyre gives us a final conception of the good means that in some way we ask him the impossible. In any case an independent definition of the good would conflict with the principle of autonomy. But nevertheless we need criteria according to which rival conceptions of the good can be assessed. The condemnation of Modernity, towards upon which MacIntyre calls us, based on the argument that Modernity does not offering any specific conception of the good cannot be justified exclusively on negative arguments. We therefore needed a more positive identification of good, which allows us to judge the beliefs of the communities on the basis of which the positive part of MacIntyre's alternative in relation to the program of Modernity will eventually be judged and, with it, his critique of Modernity.

The definition of what is good in *After Virtue* is formal; good life is what we live while seeking the good life for man. Leaving aside the question about whether this definition constitutes a vicious circle, a question arises about how the definition acquires any content. In *After Virtue* and *Whose Justice? Which Rationality?*, this happens through the connection with tradition. The notion of tradition comes to cover the void that is created by the disappearance of the ancient Greek city-state and of the medieval community, aiming at the preservation of the teleological framework, as it is associated with the defense of a culture of belonging, bringing to the surface the historical-social framework of the subject's constitution. The subject is, in terms of values, integrated in a specific wider historical-social horizon, whereas the conditions of his/her existence are intertwined with the collectively consolidated background of this horizon. Since MacIntyre rejects not only the possibility of an empirical understanding of the world (Humean tradition) but also the perspective of an a priori understanding (Kantian tradition), he turns to the possibility of a dialogue between the subject and the wider value framework inside which s/he is integrated and on the basis of which s/he is self-defined.

Nevertheless, neither the concept of tradition is given a precise definition by MacIntyre. The concept rather emerges through examples, in a way that does not convey a unified conception.<sup>8</sup> First, there is the problem of delimiting the tradition on the basis of which we are self-determined, given the fact that we belong to more traditions or even to the same tradition, which, nevertheless, we interpret differently. Is the geographical, the racial, the national, or the religious element important? Which degree of cohesion is indispensable for the recognition of a tradition and how many deviations can it endure? Finally, which is the value and on what basis is our primary commitment to a certain tradition justified?

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8] See also Annas 1989, 389, Porter 2003, 38-39. About the problem of the pluralism of traditions and their individualization, see also Feldman 1986, 314-15, Paden 1987, 135, 138 ff., Wallace 1989, 346-347, Haldane 1995, 95.



An answer to these questions is required, particularly since by invoking the powerful bond of a specific tradition a slippery path probably opens up towards authoritarianism.<sup>9</sup> Given the fact that the possibility of understanding life is intertwined with a specific time, place and civilization, the quest does not blindly move in a vacuum, but within traditions, since we are bearers of a specific story. In this context, the problem of the coexistence of individuality and social determination is raised. If the sense of individuality is not meant to stand in a contradictory relation to the sense of belonging, a provision should be made for the preservation of the bonds of the subject with the social world while also allowing space for a critical attitude towards commitments.

Man cannot be assumed to be a simple epitome of the historical-social condition, because the more the social determination is strengthened the more the margins for freedom of the will are limited. S/he can neither be considered as a completely free individuality, since that would amount to a slip towards emotivism. The more profound beliefs and commitments of the person are not dealt with as the object of choice, but as an expression of belonging to a given form of life. The value of belonging comprises a reorientation of thinking, under the aspect of which reason does not aim at the critical detachment from the historical and social conditions, but faces them as what determines the way we move inside the form of life to which we belong.

We notice that the problem appears to be double: (a) since the good does not have a predefined form, it will be defined through the quest, and this means that it can even be in conflict with the given forms of what is good, which we have inherited. From this we should conclude that the role of the community is indeed binding for the individual, albeit not in such a way that the individual is eventually absorbed by the community, because MacIntyre recognizes the possibility of setting oneself apart by adopting a critical stance (MacIntyre 1985, 221).<sup>10</sup> The very understanding of the end as a quest leaves room for the development of pluralism. Nevertheless, the rules of critique appear to be historically and communally integrated, which means that we inevitably move within traditions, even when we criticize them. Consequently the problem of authority, which is additionally attached to the existence of power structures within the tradition, does not arise, since MacIntyre does not give a dogmatic description of the human end or the fundamental characteristics of a specific tradition, but this is interwoven exactly with the relativisation of the criteria within their context.

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9] The existence of authoritarian characteristics is posed by J. Porter (2003, 62-66), and G. Graham (1995, 169). That MacIntyre forms a conservative form of traditionalism which is incompatible with (a) the Aristotelian-Thomistic tradition, see Coleman 2005, 80 ff., Nussbaum 2007, 1 ff. (b) the Hegelian tradition, see Jurist 1992, 167-69 ff. MacIntyre is judged as neoconservative on the basis of Habermasian arguments by Paden 1987, 125, 138, 141 and *passim*.

10] J. Horton & S. Mendus (2005, 13) are referring to the face of Janus in MacIntyre's philosophy: one the one hand there are elements of tolerance connected to the recognition of pluralism similar to those of liberal theories. On the other hand, he recognizes an authoritative element residing within tradition. This problem is also posed with reference to the concept of social roles in MacIntyre's theory by L. Downing (1984, 43 ff., 51-52).

(b) Since practical reason is defined by tradition, without there being objectively recognized and valid common criteria for the weighing up of heterogeneous traditions that are considered to be incommensurable, how can we choose between them during the formation of the narrative unity of our life, and which commitments can put up limits to the actions of people who are not tied up to each other by common practices or traditions? The epistemological relativism of MacIntyre leads up to cultural relativism, if it is accepted that there is a multitude of traditions and it is up to us to attach ourselves to a specific one of them or to abandon it.<sup>11</sup>

It is clear from the above that MacIntyre strives to move between the Scylla of emotivism and the Charybdis of traditionalism. He poses a demand for reframing reason, so that the problems of the universal abstract reason of Modernity are remedied, by trying at the same time to assure the possibility of inside-the-framework criticism. We notice, however, that this vacillating position of his, struggling on the one hand to preserve conditions that allow for criticism in the framework of wider practices and on the other hand fighting to reassure their authoritative character, by emphasizing the value of co-identification, as a necessary condition for the constitution of a tradition, he creates a certain internal tension in his theory. If tradition retains elements of authority, then it bears an authoritarian element. If we are to reduce the authoritarian elements to ensure the possibility of criticism, how far are we from the Enlightenment Project?

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[11] In this sense, it is indeed argued that MacIntyre's thesis collapses to the emotivist thesis; see Schneewind 1982, 659-66, Wallace 1989, 336-337, Hinchman 1989, 651, and Meilander 2006, 6.

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