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Routine, Tact, and Disciple as Components of the Subject's Identity in the Context of Its Corporeality
Rutyna, takt, dyscyplina jako komponenty tożsamości podmiotu w kontekście jego cielesności

ABSTRACT

RESEARCH OBJECTIVE: The scientific aim of the article is to present routine, tact and discipline as necessary components of the subject's identity in the context of his/her corporeality.

THE RESEARCH PROBLEM AND METHODS: The research problem is to present the role of routine, tact and discipline forming the subject's identity based on its somatic features. The method of critical analysis of philosophical and sociological literature was used in the discussion on the subject and his/her corporeality.

THE PROCESS OF ARGUMENTATION: The text presents definitions of the terms used, the theoretical background and historical outline, as well as an analysis of the impact of the discussed components on shaping the subject's identity and his/her social relations.

RESEARCH RESULTS: The analysis of the subject's identity in the context of his/her corporeality indicates that routine, tact and discipline are its essential aspects. Routine creates the continuity of personality and a sense of security. Tact is a state of harmony between the social role, personality traits and the appearance of the subject. Discipline perceived as social and political embeddedness, however, often becomes an investment in the subject's body.

CONCLUSIONS, INNOVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS: Psychological and sociological analyses indicate that the condition of the globalized world is conducive to the occurrence of deep conflicts between various aspects of the same identity. Therefore, in the current discourses on identity, the notion of liquid or protean identity appears very often. In conclusion, iIt was stated that the currently exposed "liquid identity," founded primarily on corporeality, loses the significant difference between the private and public spheres. The market trend for a "liquid identity" of a subject that constantly has to change and adapt to the changing conditions of cultural, ethnic, racial and national diversity has turned the private sphere into a public sphere. Intimacy required in actions based on tact has become obsolete.

→ **KEYWORDS:**   ROUTINE, TACT, DISCIPLINE, CARNALITY, IDENTITY

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STRESZCZENIE

CEL NAUKOWY: Celem naukowym artykułu jest przedstawienie rutyny, taktu i dyscypliny jako niezbędnych komponentów tożsamości podmiotu w kontekście jego cielesności.

PROBLEM I METODY BADAWCZE: Problemem badawczym jest przedstawienie roli rutyny, taktu i dyscypliny formujących tożsamość podmiotu na podstawie jego cech somatycznych. Zastosowano metodę krytycznej analizy literatury przedmiotu w aspekcie filozoficznym i socjologicznym w odniesieniu do podmiotu i jego cielesności.

PROCES WYWODU: Tekst przedstawia definicje użytych pojęć, podstawy teoretyczne i rys historyczny oraz analizę wpływu omawianych komponentów na kształtowanie tożsamości podmiotu i jego relacji społecznych.

WYNIKI ANALIZY NAUKOWEJ: Analiza tożsamości podmiotu w kontekście jego cielesności wskazuje, że rutyna, takt i dyscyplina są jej niezbędnymi aspektami. Rutyna tworzy ciągłość osobowości i poczucie bezpieczeństwa podmiotu. Takt to swoisty stan harmonii między pełnioną funkcją społeczną, cechami osobowości i wyglądem zewnętrznym podmiotu. Dyscyplina postrzegana jako społeczne i polityczne osaczenie staje się jednak często inwestowaniem w ciało podmiotu.

WNIOSKI, INNOWACJE, REKOMENDACJE: Analizy psychologiczne i socjologiczne wskazują, że kondycja zglobalizowanego świata sprzyja występowaniu głębokich konfliktów między różnymi aspektami tej samej tożsamości. Dlatego w prowadzonych obecnie dyskursach o tożsamości bardzo często pojawia się pojęcie płynnej czy proteuszowej tożsamości. Konkludując, stwierdzono, że eksponowana obecnie „płynna tożsamość" oparta przede wszystkim na cielesności zatraca istotną różnicę między sferą prywatną i publiczną. Rynkowa moda na płynną tożsamość podmiotu, który ciągle musi się zmieniać i dostosowywać do zmiennych warunków różnorodności kulturowej, etnicznej, rasowej, narodowej, uczyniła ze sfery prywatnej sferę upublicznioną. Intymność wymagana w działaniach opartych na takcie stała się przeżytkiem.

→ **SŁOWA KLUCZOWE:** RUTYNA, TAKT, DYSCYPLINA, CIELESNOŚĆ, TOŻSAMOŚĆ

Introduction

Routine, tact, and discipline are important components in the formation of a subject's identity in the context of their corporeality and determine the social role the person plays. Such pairs of our bodily characteristics as agility and clumsiness, muscularity and frailty, speed and slowness, lightness and heaviness are of great importance in the formation of the subject's identity. There are social norms for many somatic properties: an expectation of a slim figure in women and a muscular body in men. They influence our dispositions and behavior in certain ways. The features of our corporeality can also influence our beliefs, motives and actions. "Someone with a low sense of somatic self-confidence can feel alienated and unempowered, act in a tentative and anxious way,

limit her desires, avoid confrontational situations, expect failure, and so on" (Oksenberg-Rorty & Wong, 2001, pp. 382-383).

The identity of the subject also depends on the social role assigned or imposed on them. This is most evident when we perform the role of mother or father, which are related to our somatic dispositions and personality traits. Can our corporeality determine other social roles we perform? Every human being is shaped to a larger of smaller degree by interactions with other people, and thus develops those behaviors and habits that are conspicuous, those emotions and motivations on which our socially imposed role depends. The compatibility between the social role we play, our temperament and the characteristics of our body becomes an important problem. This is because this congruence is often lacking, and this leads either to pathological cognitive dissonance or to the emergence of an internally conflicted identity (Oksenberg-Rorty & Wong, 2001, p. 385). In such a situation, the subject can become unempowered, as they are divided and torn between the task they are supposed to perform and the failure associated with accomplishing this task.

A routine that protects the body

We can describe the problem of the relationship between our corporeality and the social role we perform at a given time and place fairly accurately through the category of a routine that exposes the repetitiveness of the activities we perform. In their subjectivity, people cannot be understood otherwise, since we cannot know the identity and corporeality of a given subject if we do not analyze his/her routine life activities related mainly to the body. It is worth referring to the concept of routine, defined by A. Giddens (2003, p. 102) as being rooted in practical consciousness based on the trust and ontological security of the subject. Routine, therefore, is an integral aspect of both the continuity of the subject's personality as he or she carries out everyday activities, as well as the social institutions that are shaped by their reproduction. According to Giddens, routine, that is, proficiency, a skill acquired through long-term practice, or a tendency to follow established templates guarantees, through trust in the action generated on its basis, a sense of ontological security for individuals and often for society as a whole. The instance of boundary or critical situations in human life are those in which routine actions cannot be applied, because the boundary situation radically and often unpredictably breaks a trained pattern of behavior or choices. Such a situation is called critical if it affects an individual subject, but also a significant number of people, e.g. a flood, earthquake, financial crisis, pandemic, war, or being in hospital or in prison.

> Boundary situations are thus "built into the regularity of social life by the very nature of the intersection between the life process or 'cycle' of the individual […]. These are the crises typically marked by rites of passage, beginning for the individual with birth and terminating in death. However, forming as they do an intrinsic part of the continuity of social life, even

though they are discontinuities for individuals, such situations tend themselves to have a definitely routinized character" (Giddens, 2003, p. 103).

The problem of a person's identity in the context of his/her corporeality can be considered both in relation to the routine activities proposed by Giddens, which guarantee a sense of ontological security, but also in relation to the sense of dignity. As an example of the violation of dignity resulting from the subject's corporeality, one can cite M. Ossowska's (1970) analysis of the critical situation of concentration camp inmates in Dachau and Buchenwald. The concentration experience is not only imprisonment itself, but also an extreme and ruthless break with the usual forms of life resulting from the brutalization of the conditions of existence, the constant threat of violence from the guards, the lack of food and other elementary necessities of life. Ossowska writes that: "The first shock to the imprisoned person is that they are taken out of their social context and deprived of the position to which they were entitled in their social environment and that was most closely associated with them" (1970, p. 56).

The insecurity and loss of dignity of those who were placed in concentration camps resulted mainly from the constant threat to their lives, but also from their deprivation of the daily routines they performed while outside of the camps. The premeditated deprivation of people's freedom and normal routines, taking them out of their social context, results in insecurity, permanent fear for their life, and the inability to react to effectively manage one's body and protect it from pain, illness, hunger, cold in such an extreme situation. Increased anxiety generates regressive behavior, which destabilizes basic interactions based on trust in others. In critical situations, though, such as being under fire on a battlefield for an extended period of time, repeated interrogation and torture, or during prison or pandemic isolation or in a sudden natural disaster one loses trust in others and hopes of surviving under great stress and fear for one's life.

Tact in social life

Tactful behavior can be called a peculiar state of equilibrium that we achieve when there is harmony between the social role we play, our personality traits and our appearance. In ontologically safe everyday life, people behave tactfully, according to Giddens (2003, p. 105) and Goffman (2006, 2008). This is because tactful behavior is socially profitable. Tact is indispensable in social life, because it is a mechanism which people use to restore the trust that has been lost, and thus create a sense of ontological security. Tact is a mechanism that channels tension and eliminates a sense of anxiety. The importance of trust, on which most interactions in modern society are based, was discussed by Simmel (1975). According to the researcher, trust occupies an intermediate position between knowledge and ignorance. In this context, it is worth considering the human body that determines personality traits and thus affects the level of social trust. The body has dimensions such as length and weight, so it occupies a place in space.

It also has age, color, and gender. However, a person is not perceived only in terms of their physical characteristics, or as Descartes put it, as *res extensa*: a thing extended in space. This is because, in addition to its physicality, it has consciousness, spirituality, and so, quoting Descartes, it is also a *res cogitans*: a thinking thing. The human body is therefore not perceived like other objects because the boundaries of the human body are not recognized and penetrated by spatial relations applied to objects. This special situation of corporeality is due to the special status of its owner, that is, the thinking and feeling subject. Thus, along with the sensation of being in space and moving in it, the body also experiences self-awareness and self-interpretation, which attest to its subjectivity. The body, then, is the center of action and consciousness, which form an inseparable whole. It can be said that the "location" (Merleau-Ponty, 2001) of the body is not only concerned with its spatial coordinates, but also with the "spatiality of the situation," i.e. the active, moving, acting body, which assumes for itself a certain goal of action, and thus carries out more or less planned tasks. Thus, the body cannot be considered outside of the context of activity, as it is perceived by its owner only in this aspect. The state in which it is, and how effective it is in action, is *the sine qua non* of ontological security, reduced to the subject's confidence in the existence of a world in which his or her body can function efficiently and reasonably flawlessly.

The co-presence of the bodies of other human subjects in spatio-temporal proximity generates various types of social processes. This is because these interactions are based on the upright posture of our body, as well as its orientation towards other subjects, especially the face. The face is the physical source of cognition, through the eyes, ears, nose, and the source of speech, as well as reflects the subject's experiences, i.e., their thoughts and emotions. It is through the face that we perceive the world and other people, but it is also through the face that we realize the important role of our corporeality in social life. Hence, face-to-face positioning and face-to-face conversation are extremely important socializing factors which affect the formation of the subject's identity.

> The primacy of the face as a medium of expression and of communication has moral implications. […] To turn one's back on another while the other is speaking is in most […] societies a gesture of indifference or contempt. Moreover, most (all?) societies tend to recognize a linguistic similarity between the face as a term referring to physiognomy and face as concerning the maintenance of self-esteem […] aspects of the preservation and "saving" of face are almost certainly generic to a whole diversity of transcultural contexts of social encounters. (Giddens, 2003, p. 109).

The human body constitutes a finite whole, but it is a varied whole. The unique construction of our body is that it adopts an upright posture, facing both the social and natural environment. In this position proper only to humans, a person wants to control their body and facial expressions, but does not always succeed or this is not always possible. In such complicated and socially ambiguous situations, it is helpful to have tact, which removes a certain kind of tension and sustains trust. One can speculate that a contemporary implication of tact is the so-called political correctness and the elimination of stigmatization

and hate language from interpersonal relationships. Therefore, being tactful in social life produces a division of the subject's activities and behavior into private and public. The private sphere frees us from routine, often superficial actions that require constant control of the body, its movements and gestures which are unacceptable in public. Thus, it should be recognized that our body lives in two spheres, private and public, which generate different types of behavior and activities. Giddens states that:

> […] eating usually occurs in definite settings at definite times, and is usually also 'public' in the restricted sense of involving gatherings of family members, friends, colleagues and so on. The dressing or adornment of the body may not be universally treated as "private" but at least in most cultures seems to be so regarded […] sexuality seems everywhere to be zoned as a back-region phenomenon, with many variations, of course, in intersecting modes of public and private behavior […] the expressions of bodily care are intricately bound up with the sustaining of the basic security system […] in situations of co-presence. Such regions may permit profanity, open sexual remarks, elaborate griping (2003, pp. 173-174).

The demarcation of the subject's life into a public sphere, which requires tactful behavior in accordance with the rules of customary law and social conduct, and a private sphere, where these rules may not apply, shows that the type of behavior described above is not a sign of mistrust. Instead, it is a sign of a weakening of the tension that is a consequence of the demand for strict control of the body and the actions and gestures performed by our body in the public sphere, in favor of relaxation of this control in the private sphere.

Discipline and the body

One of the ways of achieving the required compatibility between a subject's social role, character traits and corporeality is discipline. The human body, in order to perform certain social roles, to be useful to society, must be subjected to discipline, a kind of training that adapts and trains it while it is functioning in public space. The term *discipline* provides people with rules for effective living. Discipline creates habits, habits create routines, and routines become who a person is on a daily basis. However, citing Giddens (2003, p. 193), it can be said that this term originally only indicated the learning process, and the word "disciplined" did not mean subjugated but "learned." Only the use of the term in military structures changed its original meaning, which now connotes a certain type of regulation, rather than the training process itself. With discipline understood in this way, it was possible to shape the ideal image of the soldier, to enhance not only his/her physical strength and courage, but also signs of pride and honor. What qualities of the human body were desirable in this process of discipline? In his book describing the various types of social training that takes place in prisons, monasteries, the army, schools, and hospitals, a book with the notable title *Discipline and Punish* Foucault describes the production of an ideal soldier, for example, from a unit of lancers (1998, p. 131). He writes that the body of such a soldier, is the crest of his strength and prowess: he has

to prepare himself to wield weapons, especially in combat. Maneuvers such as marching and behavior such as lifting the head are part of the bodily rhetoric of honor in most cases. This peculiar kind of training the human body, or discipline, presupposes a pervasive control that encompasses the architecture, anatomy, mechanics and economics of corporeality. Disciplining masses of people and developing a procedure of individual and collective coercion of bodies was a process of transforming them into obedient and trained troops of workers, soldiers, clerks, and students. Referring to Foucault's considerations, one cannot help but notice parallels in the management of armies, religious organizations and educational institutions. He writes:

> It is this disciplinary time that was gradually imposed on pedagogical practice – specializing the time of training and detaching it from the adult time, from the time of mastery; arranging different stages, separated from one another by graded examinations; drawing up programmes, each of which must take place during a particular stage and which involves exercises of increasing difficulty; qualifying individuals according to the way in which they progress through these series… A whole analytical pedagogy was being formed, meticulous in its detail (it broke down the subject being taught into its simplest elements, it hierarchized each stage of development into small steps) (Foucault, 1998, pp. 154-155).

Foucault analyzes a peculiar pattern of disciplinary organizations that can be regarded as total institutions; these are primarily prisons, asylums, etc. This is understandable, since disciplinary power over the human body is most fully exposed when people are crowded into physically confined places. One can accuse this analysis of considering people only in terms of the object-bodily aspect and forgetting the subject aspect, and such a perception of the human being degrades his/her personality as his/her autonomy is increasingly restricted. The bodies that Foucault writes about do not have a face, which is a specific expression of human subjectivity. The situations described here can often lead to madness if we see them as the repressed, isolated, and dark sides of human consciousness and passion. But at the same time, the social and political embedding of the body often becomes an investment in the human body, and draws the attention of the state and social institutions to the subject. For often blocked and disciplined by power and social structures, the body becomes a site for locating and investing the subject's hopes for future gains and success.

Liquid identity and its consequences

When analyzing the relationship between a person's identity and their corporeality, one can see the significant influence of social status, which determines certain types of identity. This is because, as members of a given community, we are subject to normative sanctions in the process of socialization, i.e. law, morality, and religion. A social role can be seen as a role that a subject has to play as an actor, where there is a stage and a script, and the actor-subject only has to perform it. This entails many obligations, as well as many privileges, although these are not bisected by an axis of symmetry.

> […] in contemporary societies individuals are positioned within a widening range of zones, in home, workplace, neighborhood, city, nation-state and a worldwide system, all displaying features of system integration which increasingly relates the minor details of daily life to social phenomena of massive time-space extension… Body monitoring, control and use of facial expressions are fundamental to the process of social integration over time and space (Giddens, 2003, p. 129).

It is confirmed by psychologists and sociologists that the condition of the globalized world promotes the occurrence of deep conflicts between different aspects of the same identity. Therefore, in discourses on identity nowadays, the concept of fluid or protean identity is very often used (Bauman, 1994, 2001). It is mainly referred to when talking about the rights of certain social groups distinguished by their corporeality, i.e. by gender, physical features, age, nationality or sexual orientation. This emancipatory aspect of perceiving identity causes problems in defining it, since the dominant way of describing identity is to expose its fluidity and crisis. It is widely believed that the crisis of fluid identity is primarily due to the intersection of cultures and the unlimited flow of information made possible by modern media. The consequence of this ever-escalating process is the relativization of values and axiological chaos. Consumerism as an effect of a free, globalized market focused mostly on innovation and profit plays an additional role in the creation of fluid identities. Thus, there is a market fashion for the fluid identity of the subject, which constantly has to change and adapt to the changing conditions of cultural, ethnic, racial, and national diversity. Besides, this variability in the perception of oneself and the world that contemporary people experience is also due to the need for change determined by professional, consumer or institutional problems. However, the view is increasingly being promoted that the human subject's loyalty to identity, understood as self-identification with one's body and consciousness, is difficult to obtain because our bodily identifications prevent us from this. The subject's thoughts about and perceptions of his or her body can turn out to be erroneous and even delusional when they need to be adjusted to certain social roles. This is all the more difficult because our identifications are constantly modified and recreated, which results in many contradictions in self-perception. This is also related to the public and private spheres that the subject experiences. What used to be impossible to communicate in the public sphere, i.e., what we call domestic routines regarding our corporeality, for example: body hygiene, illness, sexual preferences, addictions, and dietary preferences have become one of the main topics of our online blogs and social network posts. Mass access to this information has turned the private sphere into a public sphere. Intimacy has become obsolete which is further reinforced by Internet users following the blogs of celebrities. The more extravagant and extraordinary they are, the more violent and non-conformist, the more likes they get and thus the more popular they become. Thus, it can be said that the narcissism of modern people primarily exposes the "I" as the motivation for action, as judging everything on the basis of one's emotional life rather than one's actions, as the clinical profile of narcissism is not a state of action, but a state of being. Narcissistic preoccupation with only the self, however, does not bring gratification, but only hurts the self (Sennett, 2009,

pp. 521-526). Often the expression of one's feelings in front of other people seems very important, but it is thus often done in a socially unacceptable form. Public manifestation of feelings does not depend solely on the will of the individual: it can be deliberately preferred, induced and manipulated by the media. Introduced into the public space, the psychological category of narcissism generating a fluid identity takes the idea of exposing the character of the subject to a logical extreme, thus prompting many to an exhibitionism which is not always socially acceptable and very often causes shock and disgust. This process generates and radicalizes mechanisms of exclusion. The extreme individuality exposed in social media tends to deepen inequalities and asymmetries between people.

The question arises which existential troubles, which physical and mental afflictions are gaining the attention of society, science, and medicine. How then is the problem of inequality and exclusion changing with regard to our corporeality, health, life expectancy, and appearance. Are there some who benefit from the increasingly progressive regulation and optimization of life processes? Who benefits financially, politically, socially from exhibiting a fluid identity? How, then, does it happen that some people experience their lives as "valuable" and others as "worthless"? How do people, in order to guide their own bodies and existence, adopt and modify scientific interpretive patterns of life, and how do they perceive themselves, whether as gene-driven bodies, or as neurobiological machines, or as composite bodies whose organic components can be interchanged. This is where the problem of biopolitics and bioethics enters the picture, which, in an exaggerated interpretation, can serve to produce and breed people who are "worthy of life" (Lemke, 2010, p. 138-139).

Conclusion

Exposure to utilitarian and consumerist attitudes leading largely to hedonism, and ignoring the good as an autotelic value leads to an identity crisis and also a loss of meaning in life. That is why feelings of emptiness, depressive behavior, lack of joy, and lack of trust in other people are becoming so common. Preoccupation with only oneself is becoming a kind of perverse fulfillment, because the world and other people bore us and are not worthy of our attention. Therefore, the expression of one's own, often extremely selfish feelings in front of other people, a kind of vivisection performed in public is becoming the dominant mode of social communication. Because a person focused only on him/herself generates the process of atomization of society and the disappearance of social ties, it is now more common to talk about a fluid identity and not about the identification of human subjects within a single community.

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