EDITORIAL

The main reason why this third issue of the Løgstrup Archive’s Newsletter did not appear in the autumn of last year is that the temporary funding of the Løgstrup Archive by the Velux Foundation expired on 1 August 2003. In spite of my other duties at the Faculty of Theology, I still have found some time to edit this third issue now. The appearance of future issues, however, will be dependent on further funding.

This issue begins with a contribution by Peter Aaboe Sørensen about what he calls “listening rationality”. Sørensen is Teaching Assistant Professor at the Institute of Philosophy and History of Ideas at the University of Aarhus. By “listening rationality” he thinks of an openness to a deeper dimension of human life that is made possible by the sense of hearing. This idea draws upon Løgstrup’s considerations in Vidde og prægnans (Breadth and Concision) on the function of the tone in speech and, not least, upon an early, forgotten article of 1938 about music. Sørensen’s contribution gives an account of this article and connects its reflections with the later Løgstrup’s ideas in Vidde og prægnans.

In the second contribution, I present my attempt to disentangle a problem, which I came across in a passage about the justification of the sovereign expressions of life in System og symbol (System and Symbol), a posthumous collection of essays by Logstrup. In the unpublished manuscripts that are accessible in the Logstrup Archive, I found two earlier versions of the problematic passage, which may help understanding how the problem could arise. By its reconstruction of the history of this passage, my contribution gives at the same time some insight into the way in which Logstrup worked.

The third contribution is a review by Hans Hauge of Zygmunt Bauman’s recent book Liquid Love. In this review Hauge, who is Associate Professor at the Institute of Language, Literature and Culture, University of Aarhus, focuses on Bauman’s treatment of Løgstrup.

Kees van Kooten Niekerk
LISTENING RATIONALITY

by Peter Aaboe Sørensen

If, in a passing moment, you look at the physiology of a human being and, from a phenomenological point of view, point out that human beings are endowed with two ears and one mouth, this could lead to the simple conclusion that we have to listen more than we have to speak – at least twice as much. However, it is not necessarily the quantity of your listening which qualifies it as listening, but rather two other decisive elements.

The first element can be described as the inevitability of listening. An interesting feature in connection with listening is that, at least on the surface, we have no possibility of evading it, which stands in glaring contrast to an approach to the world that is exclusively conditioned by the sight. We are able to evade a certain view, for example by looking away or, in the last resort, closing our eyes. We do not have that possibility with regard to listening. Because the sound fills up the whole space, we cannot evade it. Therefore, we must instead be prepared for it – relate to the world by listening.

The second element can be designated as the transcendent meaning of listening. In this lies the fundamental trait that the moment we relate to the world by listening, we basically acknowledge an authority outside ourselves and therefore transcend ourselves. This is contrary to the approach to the world of the sight, where human beings take a structuring look around the world and in this sense become unconditioned active subjects constituting reality. The ultimate logical consequence of this is that human beings do not see anything in the world but the constructions of their own consciousness. As a corrective to this, I would like to emphasize “the listening rationality” – understood as a rationality which expresses a transcendent element by pointing at something else and more in life. By this the listening rationality controverts the idea of the philosophy of consciousness, i.e. that transparency is the decisive reality criterion.

In his philosophical reflections about language K. E. Løgstrup is aware of this listening dimension, and in the publication *Vidde og prægnans* (*Breadth and Concision*) from 1976 he indicates the often neglected fact that sound is the sensuous medium of speech. Sound unfolds itself over time and hearing is the sense of time. Sound carries itself on, fills out the time, and becomes a tone which tunes the mind. At the same time, the tone conveys meaning:

Fordi, det er den vekslende videreførende tone, som talen skylder sin fart, bliver det tonen, der kommer til at befordre talens mening, ‘før’ det bliver de enkelte ords betydninger (*Vidde og prægnans*, 11).

Because it is the changing continuing tone which determines the speed of speech, it is the tone that conveys the meaning of speech ‘prior to’ the meanings of the individual words (*Breadth and Concision*, 11)

It is thus by virtue of the sound that the meaning of the spoken word is expressed, and the sound tunes the mind, which at the same time as being tuned learns the tone’s own meaning. The meaning of speech appears by virtue of the sensuality in the differentiation of the sound by the tone. Løgstrup proceeds by articulating what can be described as the listening rationality. The tone becomes the element which both carries the thought and sets it free:
To ting er ejendommelig for lyd og lydskikkelsen. Den er legemlig, og den klinger ud. Fordi lyden er legemlig, er den i stand til at give tanken bestand. Takket være sin legemlige lydskikkelse kan ordet oplagre betydning, og blive bærer af betydning. Fordi lyden klinger ud, giver den tanken fri til dens næste skridt (ibid., 16).

Two things are characteristic of sound and the form of the sound. It is bodily and it dies away. Because the sound is bodily, it is able to stabilize the thought. Thanks to its bodily form of sound, the word can store up meaning and convey meaning. Because the sound dies away, it sets free the thought for its next move (ibid., 16).

The aspect of sensuality is decisive for Løgstrup’s reflections on the relationship between speech and music. It applies to both speech and music that they draw heavily on sensuality in the form of the sound, which asserts itself in the tone. But in speech, and its tone, the sound in a way points away from itself to the meaning and thus becomes a medium for the speech, which spreads in a world which is always already there independently of the speech’s attribution of meaning. On the other hand, it applies to music that:

In music, however, the tones create their own fictive world. The unity of form created by the relationships between the tones has its own fictive space (ibid, 14)

I musikken skaber tonerne derimod deres egen fiktive verden. Den helhed af form, som forbindelserne mellem tonerne skaber, har sit eget fiktive rum (ibid., 14)

In a way Løgstrup occupies himself remarkably little with the part of aesthetics that concerns music. All the more surprising is it that already in an article of 19 January 1938 in Nationaltidende under the heading Hverken musikalsk eller umusikalsk (Neither musical nor unmusical) he presents music-metaphysical reflections which do not gain a footing – though only a minor one – until the last phase of his work.

Already in this article Logstrup makes a comparison between the tone-phenomenon and speech in everyday life aiming at an understanding of music where pure immediacy constitutes the connecting link:

Det kan først forandres den Dag, da vi simpelthen lytter til Tonerne, som vi lytter til Hverdagslivets Tale, der er lutter Umiddelbarhed, og ikke først giver Form til noget finere – en Sandhed – bag Ordene. Det ligger alt sammen i Tonerne, som alt ligger i Ordene. Der er intet at oversætte (Hverken musikalsk eller umusikalsk, 1).

It can only change on the day when we simply listen to the tones like we listen to the speech of everyday life, which is pure immediacy, without first giving form to something finer – a truth – behind the words. It is all inherent in the tones like it is all inherent in the words. Nothing need be translated (Neither musical nor unmusical, 1).

Music is thus not abstract speech but, on the contrary, immediate and straightforward in its appearance. Consequently, it is not a mere accompaniment of moods but it contains its own immediacy, which is ultimately indescribable. This immediacy expresses the experience of an unbroken unity in our relationship to the world, the experience of a deeper coherence of life in which human beings incontrovertibly are always already inserted.
Music and language have the sensuous material in common, but music has still for Løgstrup a much more intimate relationship to sound than language. In the case of language, sound remains sound. Music, on the other hand, is pure cultivation of sound in its own tone quality, a realization of the infinite possibilities of the tone. Løgstrup introduces further a distinction between sound and tone. Sound is always sound of something particular. Tone, on the other hand, is sound in its pure quality, independently of what it is the sound of. Therefore, the following statement applies:

Sprogets sanselige Stof er ikke Lyden i dens Tone-Kvalitet, men kun som ‘Lyden fra’ den menneskelige Strube og Mund; Artikulationen af denne Lyd i Talen er Sproget. Musikkens sanselige Stof er også Lyden, men ikke som ‘Lyd af’ noget, men i dens Tone-Kvaliteters uendelige Muligheder og i deres indbyrdes Lovmæssighed (ibid., 3).

The sensuous material of language is not sound in its own tone quality, but only as ‘the sound from’ the human throat and mouth; the articulation of this sound in speech is language. The sensuous material of music is also sound, but not as ‘the sound of’ something, but in the infinite possibilities of its tone qualities and in their mutual lawfulness (ibid., 3).

I all art the sensuous material and its inherent laws get the attention. Whereas, in painting, colour and form attract the attention, in music it is the tone that does so. The sensuous material is developed and cultivated in its own beauty and in the laws of this beauty.

Therefore it is the sensuous immediacy that “speaks” in music and attracts all the attention as it expresses the experience of beauty understood as the unbroken unity with the world. This sensuous immediacy ought to be the subject of thoughtful consideration:

Netop fordi det sanselige Stof, Tonen og den Lovmæssighed, der betinger Skønheden, har Opmærksomheden, indesluttes Tanken eller den sjælelige Bevægethed ganske i den musikalske Helhed (ibid., 3).

Precisely because the sensuous material, the tone and the lawfulness that determines the beauty has the attention, thought or the mental emotion is entirely absorbed in the musical unity (ibid., 3).

To summarize, it can be said that what Løgstrup designates as “listening rationality” indicates that there is a connection between thought and tone which is decisive for the appreciation of all thought.

References:
Løgstrup, K. E. (1976), Vidde og prægnans, Gyldendal, Copenhagen.
LØGSTRUP ON THE JUSTIFICATION OF THE SOVEREIGN EXPRESSIONS OF LIFE
- A TEXTUAL PROBLEM

by Kees van Kooten Niekerk

In 1982 a collection of essays by Løgstrup appeared under the title System og symbol (System and Symbol). Løgstrup had been preparing these essays for publication when his sudden death in 1981 put an end to this work. The task, however, was completed by Viggo Mortensen on behalf of a group of editors established with a view to publishing a selection of Løgstrup’s posthumous papers.

One of the essays in the collection is entitled ‘Norm og livsytring’ (Norm and Expression of Life). This essay is of special interest as it contains Løgstrup’s last comprehensive account of the sovereign expressions of life. For this reason it will be included in a volume containing English translations of extracts from Løgstrup’s ethical writings after The Ethical Demand, which is under preparation.

When working with the translation of this essay, I came across a passage which had already bothered me when I first read it many years ago. But now, being co-responsible for the translation, I had to consider it more thoroughly. I therefore turned to the Løgstrup Archive, hoping to find material which might throw light on it.

I was lucky. Among the posthumous papers on microfilm were two manuscripts containing earlier versions of the essay in question. It turned out that Løgstrup had edited the problematic passage several times. Further investigation enabled me to reconstruct the development of this passage, which elucidated the problems of the printed version. In the following I wish to present my results to the readers of this newsletter.

The problematic passage occurs in a section in which Løgstrup discusses whether the sovereign expressions of life can be justified. Løgstrup denies this: the sovereign (or, as he calls them here, spontaneous) expressions of life defy justification. The reason is that they are unconditional, which means that they disappear or are transformed into their opposite as soon as they are made contingent on a purpose other than their own. If mercy, for example, is to serve the purpose of stabilizing society, it is transformed into indifference towards the other person’s suffering.

For the same reason, Løgstrup continues, the spontaneous expressions of life defy justification. Since justification necessarily makes them contingent on that which is to justify them, they are corrupted by the very attempt at justification. “We have made them a means to obtain a goal other than their own: a means for the goal that is present in the justification” (System og symbol, 107; translated by Heidi Flegal).

Immediately after the quoted sentence, the problematic passage follows in a new paragraph. For the sake of clarity I present it here both in the Danish original and in Heidi Flegal’s English translation:

Jamen det som skal begrundes er det ikke, hvorfor mistillid er at foretrække frem for tillid, had for kærlighed, løgn for sandhed? Nej, det er ikke ægte spørgsmål. De opstår ikke af en klemme vi befinder os

But should we not justify why distrust is preferable to trust, hate to love, lies to truth? No, these are not genuine questions. They do not arise out of a predicament we find ourselves in; they do not arise out of
What is the problem? The problem is that the term “Jamen” (“But”) raises the expectation that Løgstrup is going to address a possible objection to his claim that the sovereign expressions of life defy justification. What is addressed, however, is the suggestion that one should justify the opposites of the sovereign expressions of life, distrust etc. This cannot be an objection, because in Løgstrup’s view it is precisely distrust etc. that require justification and not the sovereign expressions of life. Thus the suggestion actually confirms his thesis that the sovereign expressions of life defy justification.

This appears clearly from the selfsame essay. In a later section, Løgstrup discusses the possibility that it may be necessary to suspend a sovereign expression of life. It may, for example, be morally imperative to go against the openness of speech and put the other person on the wrong track, namely when s/he intends to use it for a destructive purpose. Løgstrup continues: “That is not to say that sincerity and insincerity are equivalent, and that we must find justification for sincerity being preferable to insincerity. What we must justify is our suspending sincerity” (ibid., 111, translated by Heidi Flegal).

The problematic nature of the suggestion is confirmed by Løgstrup’s rejection of it. “But should we not justify why distrust is preferable to trust, …?” is answered by “No, these are not genuine questions”. The reason Løgstrup gives for their being not genuine questions is that they do not arise out of a predicament or experience. However, in the above-mentioned example it is precisely a predicament that raises the need to justify being insincere. This would naturally mean that also the suggestion “But should we not …?” arises from a predicament. Consequently, it should be regarded as a genuine question. But that is what Løgstrup denies here.

In an attempt to disentangle the problem, I searched in the database on Løgstrup’s posthumous papers on combinations of “livsytring” (expression of life) and “begrundelse” (justification). Three search results were returned, which referred to three unpublished manuscripts accessible on microfilm in the Løgstrup Archive. Two of these manuscripts turned out to contain earlier versions of the problematic passage.

The first one is a manuscript registered as V.11.16.1-2. This, among other things, addresses the question as to whether it is possible to justify an ethical stance. Parts of this manuscript have been incorporated in ‘Norm og livsytring’ (Norm and Expression of Life) in a somewhat edited form. Among its 35 pages there is a single type-written sheet (V.11.16.2, p. 7), which deals with the unconditional nature of the sovereign expressions of life. In one paragraph Løgstrup puts forward an argument similar to that in System og symbol in favour of the claim that the sovereign expressions of life defy justification. Now, this paragraph is followed by a paragraph which is almost identical with the paragraph of System og symbol beginning with our problematic passage. What is interesting, however, is that the first two sentences are different. They run as follows:
Måske vil nogen sige: Jamen hvorfor er
mystillid ikke at foretrække fremfor tillid,
had for kærlighed, løgn for sandhed? Men
det er ikke ægte spørgsmål.

Someone may say: But why is distrust not
preferable to trust, hate to love, lies to
truth? However, these are not genuine
questions. [my translation]

In contradistinction to the passage of *System og symbol*, this version makes good
sense! Having contended that the sovereign expressions of life defy justification, Løgstrup
envisages a possible challenge. This challenge is framed as a critic or sceptic asking why
distrust etc. should not be preferred. The provocative suggestion is: It is not evident why
we should not prefer the opposites of the sovereign expressions of life. This suggestion
entails the challenge to give good reasons for not preferring distrust etc. And that would
amount to a justification of the sovereign expressions of life.

Løgstrup replies by refusing to take the challenge seriously. The reason he gives for
this is that the questions contained in the challenge are not genuine questions because they
do not arise out of a predicament. No one would seriously claim that distrust etc. are to be
preferred. Therefore, the questions are sophistic humbug!

One might discuss whether Løgstrup, after all, does not give a kind of justification
when he proceeds by saying that if trust is preferable to distrust etc. coexistence and
communal life would cease. But this problem is not at stake here. My purpose is merely to
show that the version of manuscript V.11.16.1-2 makes good sense.

Why has this unproblematic version been changed into the problematic one that we meet
in *System og symbol*? Here the other manuscript puts us on the right track. It is registered as
VIII.1.14.2 and contains 9 sheets. Among these are two type-written sheets which are of
interest for our subject.

The first sheet, paged 6, starts with the heading “De spontane livsytringer forbyder
begrundelse” (The spontaneous expressions of life defy justification). This heading is
identical with that of the section of *System og symbol*, with which we are concerned. The
sheet’s first three paragraphs are almost identical with the first three of that section. The
sheet contains three more paragraphs, the first two of which deal with the unconditional
nature of mercy and the third one draws the conclusion that the spontaneous expressions
of life defy justification. Though different in wording, their content corresponds to the
fourth and fifth paragraphs of the *System og symbol* section, which precede the paragraph
under consideration. In the light of these data it seems warranted to conclude that this
sheet is a draft of the first five paragraphs of that section.

The second sheet, which follows the first and is paged 7a, is a copy of the sheet
discussed above (V.11.16.2, p. 7). But now all paragraphs except the one that corresponds
to the paragraph of our concern have been crossed out. Obviously, Løgstrup wanted to
add the remaining paragraph to those of the first sheet. However, it did not pass
unmodified. Løgstrup edited the first (type-written) sentence by hand. The altered version
is:

Måske vil nogen sige: Jamen det som skal
begrundes er hvorfor mistillid ikke er at
foretrække fremfor tillid, had for
kærlighed, løgn for sandhed? Men det er
ikke ægte spørgsmål.

Someone may say: But that which has to
be justified is why distrust is not
preferable to trust, hate to love, lies to
truth? However, these are not genuine
questions. [my translation]
Why did Løgstrup make this alteration? In the original version the critic asks for a reason why distrust etc should not be preferred. The purpose of this question is to provoke an answer which would amount to a justification of the sovereign expressions of life. However, this purpose is merely suggested in the text. It is not mentioned explicitly. It seems to me that Løgstrup inserts “that which has to be justified” in order to make this purpose explicit, clarifying his intentions. At the same time, this clarification has the advantage that it connects this paragraph more closely to the previous one, in which he had asserted that the sovereign expressions of life defy justification.

In so far as this alteration is a clarification of the original text, the paragraph still makes good sense. It should be noted, however, that the form of the critic’s remark is now a straightforward objection. It is no longer framed as a provocative question suggesting that the opposites of the sovereign expressions of life might just as well be preferred. In this new version, Løgstrup’s reply that the questions (now: the questions that are contained in the critic’s remark) are not genuine questions – indeed, humbug! – is therefore not quite as convincing as in the original one.

In the printed text our paragraph has been altered once more. The alteration can be traced to a large manuscript (265 pages) registered as IV.15.2.3. The manuscript is only accessible in original. It has not been copied to microfilm. Since it is as good as identical with System og symbol, it must have served as the latter’s source. In this manuscript the type-written first two sentences of our paragraph are identical with the altered version of VIII.1.14.2, except for a lacking “?” after the first sentence. However, these sentences have been edited by Løgstrup’s hand into the text printed in System og symbol (cf. the picture). For the sake of convenience I reproduce the edited sentences once more:

Jamen det som skal begrundes er det ikke, hvorfor mistillid er at foretrække frem for tillid, had for kærlighed, løgn for sandhed? Nej, det er ikke ægte spørgsmål.

But should we not justify why distrust is preferable to trust, hate to love, lies to truth? No, these are not genuine questions.

Compared to the version of VIII.1.14.2, three things have happened. First, Løgstrup has cut “Måske vil nogen sige:” (“Someone might say:”). Second, he has moved “ikke” (“not”) from the subordinate to the principal clause. Third, he has changed the opening “Men” (“However”) of the second sentence into “Nej” (“No”).

The first alteration is just a stylistic curtailment, which has no importance for the overall meaning. The third alteration is a natural consequence of turning the first sentence into a question (which it was not in VIII.1.14.2, in spite of the pending “?”). It is the second alteration that has caused the change in meaning which makes the final, printed version problematic. Now the critical objection is that it must be justified why distrust etc. are preferable, and not why they are not. The objection has been turned into its opposite!

How could the mere movement of “ikke” (“not”) from one clause to the other cause this to happen? The reason is that the new context has given it a new function. In VIII.1.14.2 the function of “ikke” (“not”) is the negation of the preferability of distrust etc. – which has to be justified. In the final version its function is to express the expectation of an affirmative answer to the question as to whether the preferability (now not the non-
preferability) of distrust etc. has to be justified. So it is in Danish and so it is in English, too. It is this change in the function of “ikke” (“not”) that is responsible for the change in the meaning of the objection and the consequent trouble in the understanding of the final text.

Two questions are left. For one thing, why did Logstrup change the text once more? We cannot know this for sure, but a natural suggestion is that Logstrup noticed that his reply in VIII.1.14.2: “However, these are no genuine questions” did not fit the previous sentence, which was not formulated as a question. In order to remedy this deficiency he reformulated the sentence as a question, probably remembering that it had been a question in the original version.

For another thing, how could it happen that Logstrup changed the text without noticing the change in meaning? Of course any attempt to answer this question is guesswork.

Allow me, nevertheless, to make such an attempt. At least a part of the answer may lie in the first sentence of the version of VIII.1.14.2. What I have in mind is that, taken by itself, this sentence is ambiguous. It can be read as a demand to justify why distrust etc. should not be preferred. So it should be read in the light of the original version. But it can also be read as a demand to justify why distrust etc. should be preferred, where “not” in conjunction with “why” has the function to suggest that we might well prefer distrust etc. Logstrup’s intention to change the sentence into a question may have promoted this reading, the more so as the function of “not” is here the same as in the original, provocative question. This is, to be sure, pure speculation. However, it may at least throw some light on a change in meaning which otherwise seems quite incomprehensible.

My conclusion is that, to a certain extent, a reconstruction of the history of our passage makes it comprehensible how the problems that we meet in the printed text could arise. This reconstruction is, of course, theoretical and cannot be corroborated definitively.
However, it seems to me to be a plausible one because it elucidates the problems and does so with reference to given textual material.

If my reconstruction holds, the question arises whether this could be a reason to change the text of *System og symbol*. One might be tempted to replace the first two sentences of the problematic passage by those of the original version (of V.11.16.2), since this would convey a good sense to the passage as a whole. However, I think that this temptation should be resisted as the printed version, after all, represents the author’s own last edition of the text. If Løgstrup had had the opportunity to read the proofs, he might have discovered the problems and changed the text. But that should not allow us to do so. I therefore think, as far as the English translation is concerned, that it would be most appropriate to stick to the printed version and offer the original version as an alternative in a note.

Reference:

**BOOK REVIEW**


*by Hans Hauge*

Polish thinkers in exile have contributed considerably to English thought. First Joseph Conrad, the novelist, then B. Malinowsky, the anthropologist, next Namier, the historian and last but not least, Zygmunt Bauman, the sociologist. Add to this the near absence of sociology in England.

Bauman was educated at the London School of Economics in the 1950’s; was a great admirer of English socialism and he was a sort of communist whilst he was professor at the University of Warsaw. He left or was forced to leave Poland in 1968; I guess because of the anti-Semitic campaigns. He spent a few years in Israel before coming “home” to Leeds.

In recent years he has published a spate of books on modernity and critical of post-modernity. He is not himself a postmodernist, whatever that means, but a somewhat oldfashioned modernist and a socialist.

I guess he discovered K.E. Løgstrup - sometimes called Knud Logstrup - when he visited the University of Copenhagen. He will have read The Ethical Demand. Apart from Løgstrup also the Danish historian of ideas, Lars-Henrik Schmidt, Løgstrup’s antidote, is discussed by Baumann.

Bauman’s *Life in Fragments: Essays in Postmodern Morality* (1995) contained several references to The Ethical Demand in a chapter on forms of "togetherness" in which Bauman makes a classification of various such forms. Togetherness’ purpose is to unload, he claims, the "burden of individuality". He hits upon Løgstrup’s distinction between unspoken and spoken ethical demands. Especially the idea of the unspokenness appeals to him.
The spoken demand is "rule-governed togetherness" and creates "an archipelago of one-resident islands". The other unspoken demand is the moral one proper. The first is being-with, the other being-for; the first is convention, the other commitment. All this sounds quasi-existentialist. His bringing together Lévinas and Løgstrup is surely illuminating and much more work could be done along those lines. Bauman seems always to be searching for something beyond rules, codes or systems.

In the epilogue to the book he returns to Løgstrup and compares him with Leon (or Lev) Shestov, the Russian-French existentialist philosopher who was inspired by Kierkegaard. Where, as Bauman notes, Løgstrup claims we meet the other with trust, Shetov said we fear the wolf in our fellow human beings. Can they both be right, asks Bauman? He next explains why the two have reached such seemingly contradictory diagnoses of the first encounter with another human being. Løgstrup, he explains, was born and died (he didn't) in "tranquil, serene, peaceful Copenhagen. where the royals bicycled". One wonders where he picked up that story? Shestov, on the other hand, was hunted down and exiled from tsarist and later communist Russia. Hence they generalised from two different experiences. This leads him to conclude that we always generalise from what we see. This is a quite reductive point of view and it allows us to reduce Bauman's unease with postmodernity, fragments and individualisation to his being socialised in a communist country. This explains his longing for such togetherness, community and moral togetherness which he must have experienced in Stalinist Poland.

In his most recent book, Liquid Love: On the Frailty of Human Bonds, there are again a number of references to Løgstrup - and by the way to the Danish politician Pia Kjærsgaard. The book is more like a literary text than a sociological treatise. It is a story, as he says, with two principal characters: love and death. He claims in it that we now live beyond the trinity or "trinune prison" of territory/nation/state and there is no hope for any kind of human community. The prospects are always bleak for Bauman, the socialist.

Two words are important in the title: 'liquid' and 'bond'. Bauman has always stressed the importance of structures that bind and subordinate the individual. In that sense he is a "structure-over-human-agency" sociologist.

The theme is that there is no longer togetherness but relationship(s). His point is that people worry about one thing but speak of another. They say they want to relate but they do not want those relationships to hold but be loose and light (p. xi). Partners have become networks. Again: no commitment in a fragmented postmodern global world.

Under the chapter heading of "failure of a relationship is more often than not a failure of communication" (pp. 16ff.) he introduces Knud Løgstrup. He has by now got some of the biographical facts right but not quite. He calls him "the soft-spoken evangelist from the parish of Funen". As we know Løgstrup was anything but soft-spoken in his sermons and Funen is not a parish. After this Løgstrup became the "clarion-voiced ethical philosopher of the University of Aarhus". Clarion-voiced? Was it not rather the other way round? Be that as it may.

Bauman quotes from Løgstrup the passage about what creates a good relationship: "a common cause against a third person" and especially "mutual praise". He mentions the "perversion" which consists in wanting to change another person. Such perversions, Bauman continues, are "all too often the children of love". Either you let the other be as he or she is or you try to change the other.
In the third chapter - "On the Difficulty of Loving Thy Neighbour" - Bauman again discusses Løgstrup. He begins with Freud's reflections on love of one's neighbour. It is rationally speaking absurd to love one's neighbour. Why should I? Why love a stranger that shows me no consideration? It goes against all our drives and against our nature. Hence the precept of loving one's neighbour is for Freud and Bauman the "birth act of humanity (p. 78)." To love one's neighbour is the "leap of faith" and the transition from the "instinct of survival to morality".

Bauman then introduces Løgstrup after having discussed several tragic or "pessimistic" views of human nature. Yet again he is there to represent the "optimistic view of the natural inclination of humans". Bauman quotes the opening passage from The Ethical Demand about how we encounter the other with "natural trust". He explains this (away) in a fashion similar to the one in Life in Fragments - biographically. Løgstrup, says Bauman, conceived the idea "during the eight years following his marriage spent in the small and peaceful parish of Funen Island". Løgstrup might have thought about trust in his vicarage but he did not publish it until many years later - in 1956. Bauman cannot believe that such a thought could have been gestated during the war in Aarhus. He then repeats the idea that we generalise (Løgstrup never generalised, I should add) from what we see and from experience: "people tend to weave their images of the world out of the yarn of their experience (p. 87)." In other words, according to Bauman, Løgstrup never could have arrived at the phenomenological idea of trusting surfaces had it not been for the peaceful years in Funen. The idea of trust is "sunny" and "buoyant", Bauman thinks, and he believes that the "present generation" will find Løgstrup's ideas "far-fetched", since they will recognise themselves more easily in shows as Big Brother and The Weakest Link where the message is more or less what Lev Shestov represented earlier: you cannot trust others.[1]

Bauman continues that in a "game of survival" by which he must mean the present global era, Løgstrup's "sovereign expressions of life" - trust, compassion, and mercy - would be suicidal. "Trust has been sentenced to a life full of frustration". However, all this does not invalidate Løgstrup because moral impulses do not arise out of reflection but the "hope of morality" is vested in prereflexive spontaneity. Bauman is intrigued by something that is not at product of rules, codes, conventions or systems.

Bauman debates the sovereign expressions of life; the spontaneous as well as the constrained ones; he sees them as versions of Heidegger's Befindlichkeit and Stimmung. The sovereign ones are autonomous and the constrained ones heteronomous, Bauman writes. In the constrained ones the self stays "wholly on the receiving side", it is a sufferer and not an actor. This is a rather interesting translation of Løgstrup's ideas into a kind of sociological language. In the sovereign expressions of life the self is an actor but not in the constrained ones.

The section ends with these words: "the overcoming of self-imposed constraints by unmasking and discrediting the self-deception they rest on emerges therefore as the preliminary, indispensable condition for giving free rein to sovereign life's expression; an expression that manifests itself, first and foremost, in trust, compassion and mercy "(p. 96).

Bauman misses the religious aspects or disregards them. The self is not an autonomous actor in the sovereign expressions of life - God is the actor; we just react.
To conclude: it is always fascinating to see how Bauman uses Løgstrup and to see Løgstrup placed in new and unusual contexts. Bauman sometimes historicises him or gets some facts wrong. It is never "our" all too well known Løgstrup whom we encounter in his texts but a fruitfully defamiliarised one. We are looking forward to seeing Løgstrup in new company next time he appears in another Bauman critique of the world as it is.


**BRIEF NOTES**

*Publications after the Sandbjerg Workshop*

The edited papers and comments presented at the Workshop on *The Significance of K. E. Løgstrup’s Ethics*, held at the Sandbjerg Estate on 8-12 May 2002, have been sent to the University of Notre Dame Press. They will be subjected to a peer review and are expected to appear at the beginning of next year. The English translations of extracts from Løgstrup’s ethical writings after *The Ethical Demand* have been reviewed and are now under revision. They are similarly expected to appear at the University of Notre Dame Press at the beginning of next year.

*Seminar to celebrate K. E. Løgstrup’s 100th anniversary*

Løgstrup was born on 2 September 1905. This event will be celebrated next year in several ways. From 3 - 5 March a seminar organized in cooperation between the Institute of Philosophy and History of Ideas and the Løgstrup Archive will be held at the University of Aarhus. In connection with the seminar, a special issue of *Slagmark (Battleground), Journal of the History of Ideas*, on Løgstrup’s thought, will appear. More information about this seminar and other activities will be published in due course on the website of the Løgstrup Archive: [www.loegstrup.au.dk](http://www.loegstrup.au.dk).