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Categorization of Human Beings
versus
The Universality of Human Rights

Master thesis in Human Rights Studies

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Abstract

The principle of non-discrimination is central to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and to the human rights discourse that surrounds it. The principle that no distinction should be made between people based on categorizations such as race and gender. Yet, discourse against discrimination is highly based on such categorizations. A discourse limited to such concepts is deeply problematic - A threefold problem of categorization of human beings versus the universality of human rights:

1. Words based on specific categories can never include everyone.
2. Each word needs to be defended against discourses that would exclude them, make them meaningless or turn them into tools of oppression by protecting stereotypes and categorizations rather than the human beings being stereotyped and categorized.
3. Discourse based on dividing people tend to divide them and lock them into these divisions, rather than bringing them together and helping them to liberate themselves. Basing the discourse on categorization of people can easily turn into a part of the problem rather than a part of the solution.

The solution proposed in this thesis is to expand the discourse for human rights research and advocacy by introducing a new conceptual framework around the concept of categorism, which is “prejudice, bigotry and discrimination, based on a categorization of human beings”. As a conceptual framework, categorism contains many different concepts divided into the three aspects of facets, foci and abstractions. The facets are how the categorism is done. This part of the model is based on Young's model “The Five Faces of Oppression”. The foci are categorism based on specific categorizations: The traditional concepts of racism, sexism, homophobia and so on. The abstractions are categorization itself being problematic. This part of the model is based on social constructionism and on the works of Dawkins, Leff and many other thinkers discussed throughout this thesis. As a side effect, the analysis has also spawned a range of potentially useful concepts and terms. These include dichotomism and narrativism (which are both closely related to the concept of categorism), as well as cateity and narrativization (which are both closely related to the concept of discourse). Also equivocations and discursive alliances, both signifying certain potential pitfalls of discourse. Finally, it provides a stronger yet more flexible definition of the concept of oppression: “Oppression is categorism in a severely unequal balance of power. A balance where a person, group or social structure doing categorism has a strong power advantage over the human beings who this categorism is being done to.”.

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Preface

It is sometimes necessary to get away. To go elsewhere than your usual point of reference, whatever that usual point of reference might be, to get a new perspective. When I moved to Indonesia, I had lived all my life in Sweden. Sure I had visited various parts of the world, but only as a visitor.

In any social context, people are expected to have certain traits. In the mainstream society of Sweden, a person is expected to, among other things, be a white, non-religious man who is sexually attracted to women but not to men. Deviations from these social expectations are mostly tolerated. Most people don't get angry when a woman has an opinion in public, or when two men are holding hands. It may be somewhat common to raise an eyebrow or look confused, but displays of outright hatred is expected to come only from a small handful of contemptible bigots. You know, that other kind of people, who are not enlightened like the rest of us. Some deviations from the norm is sufficiently mainstream to not even get raised eyebrows. For example, it is pretty normal to be a woman and/or a Christian. At least as long as you are not too feminine, not too unfeminine, and not too Christian.

In any social context, people are expected to have certain traits. In the mainstream society of Indonesia, a person is expected to, among other things, be an Asian, deeply religious man who is sexually attracted to women but not to men. To be white is a very peculiar deviation from the social expectations. It comes with a lot of stereotypes and preconceptions. Including an expectation of being a Christian, although you may also be a Muslim or any other state religion such as Buddhist. To be non-religious is off the scale. Or at least very deep on the scale. In any case, it is not normal as far as social norms are concerned.

In my experience, “different cultures” is not a matter of “different kinds of people”, but rather a matter of people being faced with different sets of social expectations. Different norms for what attitudes and behaviors are seen as cool or admirable, as well as for how they can behave without facing concern, condescension, or even outright condemnation. In the middle of my half year living in Indonesia's capital Jakarta, a filling broke. Suddenly, I had a gaping hole with sharp edges in one of my teeth. The solution was quite simple. One of my Muslim friends took me to the local military installation, where she assured the army officials that I'm a Christian. Having this formality out of the way, I got to meet a very competent and very cheap dentist at the military hospital. Problem solved, the whole process took

less than an hour.

It is not in itself illegal to be an atheist, agnostic or otherwise non-religious in Indonesia. However, you are expected to belong to one of the six state religions. Islam, Christianity, Catholicism, Buddhism, Hinduism and Confucianism. Which one of these six religions you belong to is printed on your id-card, and it has to be included on pretty much all bureaucratic paperwork. Non-believers are generally seen as evil, antisocial and crazy. And also as communists. The later is especially dangerous in a country where the 1965 genocide against communists (targeting real communists as well as suspected “communists” such as feminists and labor rights activists) is still conceptualized as a heroic act of saving the country from the evil onslaught of Godless Communism. It could therefore have been a problem to abstain from telling the hospital that I'm a Christian. Yes, it could certainly have been a problem, even if it wasn't for the fact that the hospital, like so much else in Indonesia, was owned by the military. However, telling the military that I'm a Christian could also have been problematic. Although I was automatically born into the Church of Sweden, as Sweden was “A Christian Nation” at the time of my birth, I am one of the many citizens who – along with the government itself – has since separated from the church. Although this is entirely normal in Sweden, cultural patterns do tend to translate poorly.

At the time of my visit to the military hospital, as well as the rest of my half year in Jakarta, a man named Alexander Aan was imprisoned in another part of Indonesia. Technically, he had not been convicted of being an atheist. Instead, he had been convicted on charges such as having a job in spite of being an Atheist. Before getting the job, he had applied for it. The application form had asked for his religion. He had written “Muslim”, since that was the religion of his family and the religion printed on his ID Card. By later proclaiming himself to be an atheist, he indirectly confessed to the crime of having lied on his job application. I never told my Muslim friend to tell anyone that I'm a Christian, and I never defined myself to her face as being Christian or non-Christian. She filled out the paperwork for me, and only afterward did I find out that I had been categorized. Best solution for everybody. The military got some money, and I got my tooth repaired.

In Indonesia, just like in most other countries, the mainstream is to be religious without being fanatical or bigoted about it. The Indonesian Muslims I met typically expressed their disdain for Islamist

extremists in the same manner as Swedish Christians I have met typically expressed their disdain for *Christianist* extremists: People positioning themselves as ordinary mainstream people distancing themselves from the silly and more or less destructive fringe movements. One interesting attitude I encountered was people who believed that militant Islamism is far more powerful and dangerous in Sweden and the rest of Europe than it is in Indonesia or even the middle east. Turned out that the propaganda of muslim-hating groups like French Front National and Swedish Sverigedemokraterna is rather wide-spread in countries with Muslim populations: As the *antimuslimists* are busy spreading paranoid fantasies about scary violent Muslims taking over the world, Islamists happily distribute this propaganda and use it to brag about their supposed position of power in Europe. What I noticed here was certain antimuslimists and certain islamists building what I would later come to call *narrative alliances* and *discursive alliances*: Creating a mutual story about the world, a story where they feature each other as the main antagonist – as well as creating a mutual framework for talking about things. (Note: Words in italics are further discussed in “Appendix E: Glossary”.)

In my everyday life in Jakarta, being religious or non-religious was never an issue. The main thing that was off about me was instead my habit of walking too and from work every day. A white person who don't take taxi everywhere, that's simply unheard of. So I heard from some of my friends, and so I saw in the eyes of people reacting to my presence. I was also told there are two words for “white person” in the Indonesian language. One is “bule”, which means “one of those strange white people”. And the other is “bule kerri”, which means “a strange white person who doesn't even have a lot of money but is here anyway for some odd reason”. Or something like that. Different persons told me slightly different definitions. In itself, skin color is merely an issue of needing sunblock lotion in some contexts, or needing vitamin pills in others. In itself, belief is unique from person to person and one of the many ways in which people can find connection to each other. Social expectations and social structures is what matters, and what makes categorization such as dividing people by skin-colors or religions matter. It is therefore always a matter of context.

When I moved to Jakarta, I had already been thinking in terms of “categorism” for roughly a decade. It all started with reading Iris Marion Young's essay “The Five Faces of Oppression” in Gender Studies at the university. I wholeheartedly agreed with the idea that we should analyze oppression in terms of how it was being done and by who, rather than by who was being victimized. When I first read that essay, it

had already annoyed me for many years how the system limited to listing “racism”, “sexism”, “homophobia” and so on always excluded people being targeted. Once you are indulging in one of the five faces of oppression, it is always easy to find new excuses for targeting people. Replying that this or that category of people isn't an acceptable target thus fails to solve the problem. After adding a few more faces of oppression, not finding the five given by Young sufficient, I quickly moved on to the idea of categorism. A unifying term for what was being done as well as who it was being done to. I started writing a book about it, but quickly realized that I didn't know enough yet. So I started expanding my university studies. Sociology and Theology, Linguistics and Human Rights Studies. Among other things, and on top of the degrees in psychology and sexology I already had. Along this journey, learning the word “*intersectionality*” was a great inspiration for me. I remember one big meeting a long time ago. As we were about to be split into smaller discussion groups, everyone was encouraged to suggest topics for these smaller groups. What I wanted to talk about was intersectionality, but since I had not yet learned that particular word I was limited to feebly trying to describe what I meant. Of course, nobody wanted to join a so haphazardly themed discussion group. How lost I felt, not having the words I needed to use.

As I every day walked on the streets of a city where a person of my skin-color was odd enough to begin with, and certainly not socially expected to walk on the streets, I finally started to develop my conceptualization of categorism for real. One of the greatest additions was the concept of *dichotomism*, with the term dichotomism being one single word for Richard Dawkins' criticism of people's tendencies to think in black and white and mistake concepts for being reality itself.

At first, I regarded this concept as nothing more than a part of the concept of categorism. I later realized that although they are intertwined and feed each other, dichotomism and categorism are separate. While dichotomism certainly deals with categorization, this is regardless of what kind of categorization we are talking about. Categorism is about categorization of people, which is different from all other categorizations in two ways. First of all, people deserve human rights and dignity, unlike inanimate objects and abstract concepts. Second, we are people. We are the ones who divide each other and the world into “us and them”. With dichotomism comes monolithization, the fantasy that the world consists of monolithic blocks. If dichotomism tells us that everyone is either white or Asian, monolithization tells us that all whites are in one certain way or all Asians in another, or that one single

social structure reigns over it all. In truth, there are many different social structures interacting with each other as a complex web of humans interacting with themselves and each other.

Among the people I was hanging out while living in Indonesia – friends, coworkers, activist groups, subcultures and so on – I was usually the only white person around. In fact, every single person who I got to know during that half year was Asian. While I did meet a few white persons, I only met them a few times each and almost always as part of a larger social context such as a conference. In any of the social contexts I was part of, except for the local atheist subculture, I may have been the only - or almost only - person who didn't belong to one religion or another. This was never a problem, in spite of non-believers in Indonesian society being marginalized, demonized and sometimes even persecuted. In Indonesia as well as in Sweden, I have mostly socialized among enlightened and reasonably educated people – the kind of people who, while being quite normal themselves, have a high degree of acceptance and tolerance for people who deviate from norms and social expectations. More importantly, I was not in a socially vulnerable position. Which, among other things, gave me a lot of freedom in my choices of who to socialize with.

The NGO where I worked, SETARA Institute for Democracy and Peace, is a highly respected local organization dedicated to protecting the rights of religious minorities. For example marginalized indigenous people, Muslims from groups that some consider to be heretical from mainstream Islam, and also persecuted Atheists such as Alexander Aan.

As I returned to Sweden and started working on this Master Thesis, my concepts kept growing. Adding new concepts to the package, while the old concepts kept getting bigger and more refined. More and more, I started noticing the importance of narratives. How people keeps telling themselves and each other stories about themselves, about each other, about life in general, and so on. With this thesis, I finally have a reasonably solid conceptual framework. A foundation for discourse on these issues. To make my own thoughts more refined and coherent, if nothing else. There is so much more to do. But this is a start.

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And finally, my gratitude to nobody in particular for having been born in a context where I have been free to pursue my dreams and interests. My greatest privilege in life has been to be born into a country with freedom of speech and freedom of education, as well as into a set of contexts with sufficient levels of political and socioeconomic stability to make it reasonably safe to make the most of these freedoms. Such privileges are easy to take for granted, although this privilege of being able to take them for granted is still only available to a minority of humanity. A growing minority, but so far still only a minority. Hopefully there will come a day when human rights for everybody is a fully realized goal, not merely an ideal to dream about.

1. Introduction

There is something wrong with how we typically categorize people. The very idea that a label, an abstract concept used to categorize people, actually describes those human beings who we include in the category. Living in a social reality largely based on categorization of people, we need to use categorization in our struggle against prejudice, bigotry and discrimination. This usage risk reproducing and reinforcing the very prejudice, bigotry and discrimination we fight against.

We fight for universal human rights. A greatly inclusive “we”, as much of contemporary global civilization embraces the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and internalizes human rights discourse. As will be further explored in the chapter “Human Rights discourse regarding categorization of human beings”, there are three different ways in which Human Rights can be seen as universal:

1. They are for everyone. (Universalism as idealism, Human Rights as equality for all.)
2. They are widely accepted. (Universalism as legal positivism, Human Rights as legal rights.)
3. They express universal morality. (Universalism as natural rights, Human Rights as natural rights.)

Despite the universality of Human Rights, their implementation is often based on categorization of human beings. In Sweden, the law against discrimination is based on seven categorizations of human beings: Gender, Gender identity or expression, Ethnicity, Religion or other belief, Disability, Sexual Orientation (limited to mean only heterosexuality, bisexuality and homosexuality) and Age.¹

Being based on categories of people, the law inevitably exclude discriminated groups, since it is theoretically impossible to list all categorizations and categories that could possibly be targeted. Among the critics of the law's lack of inclusiveness are voices such as the United Nations Committee on the elimination of racial discrimination (arguing that race should be explicitly mentioned²), the Swedish-Finnish “Sisuradio” of Swedens national radio (arguing that national minorities should be included³) and the Swedish branch of International Lesbian and Gay Alliance (arguing that the sexual minorities

¹ Svensk FörfattningsSamling (2008:567:4.1)

Finns även tillgänglig online på <http://www.notisum.se/rnp/sls/lag/20080567.HTM>

² UN (2013)

³ Sverigesradio.se (2008).

asexuals, sadomasochists, fetishists and polyamorists also need to be protected from discrimination⁴).

Internationally, much of the development that has happened since the UDHR in 1948 has been based on specific categorizations of people, such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination⁵ and United Nations Committee on the elimination of racial discrimination. In itself, this is not a problem: Specific foci of discrimination do exist, such as discrimination based on categorization by race. It becomes a problem when discourse is limited by categories, or locked into categories. While very much is based on categorization, we live in an increasingly globalized world where it becomes harder and harder to categorize people: As people form identities and relationships across boundaries such as race, culture and language, more and more people are not classifiable.⁶

In these struggles for universal Human Rights, we need to highlight categories of people who often get their rights and dignity violated. Race is a common categorization to base prejudice, bigotry and discrimination on. We call this racism. Gender is another common such categorization, we call it sexism. Homosexuals and bisexuals are a often targeted category of people, we call it homophobia. However, as we base our struggle on categories, face a threefold problem of categorization of human beings versus the universality of Human Rights: Non-inclusiveness, inviting *discursive struggles*, and reinforcing *monolithization*. (Words in italics are summarized in “Appendix E: Glossary”, besides being discussed in the main text.)

When we base the fight squarely on concepts such as racism, sexism and homophobia, we risk losing our inclusiveness by giving an impression that fight is about particular categories and categorizations, rather than about the universality of human rights. This impression includes, among other things, the idea that it would be okay to discriminate as long as it is based on another categorization than the ones covered. For example, as those who hate immigrants from the Middle East and Africa find that bigotry based on skin-color has fallen out of fashion, they have a simple solution at hand: Stop calling the targets “arabs” and “blacks”, simply start calling them “Muslims” instead⁷.

⁴ RFSL (2012) Verksamhetsplan.

⁵ Ghandhi (2010), page 31

⁶ Balibar (1995), page 54.

⁷ Tyrer (2013, page 171) argues that islamophobia is racism and that the words “muslim” and “islam” are used as substitutes for the word “race”.

Having made such a simple change in rhetoric, the bigotry suddenly looks socially acceptable again... at least until a new word is established for prejudice, bigotry and discrimination against the targeted group. In the case of Muslims this word would be “*antimuslimism*” or “*islamophobia*”. We keep inventing new words for prejudice, bigotry and discrimination against one group or another. *Transphobia* when it is against transsexuals and other trans people, *ageism* when it is based on age, and so on. These words based on specific categorizations are useful, but inherently incapable of solving this underlying problem of categorization of human beings versus the universality of human rights: They will never include everyone, since categorization is fluid: There will always be new categorizations and categories to use as the excuse for prejudice, bigotry and discrimination. The act of categorizing in a certain way, or refusing to categorize in a certain way, is often a part of the problem rather than a part of the solution.

As we keep inventing new words for prejudice, bigotry and discrimination targeting specific groups or being based on specific categorizations, we also face discursive struggles as another side of the problem: For each new word, we need to defend the word against arguments that it isn't really a thing, that it isn't really a word, or that the meaning of the word should instead be something that would make the word unusable - or turn it into a tool of *oppression*.

A third side of the problem is that basing the language on the categories used to discriminate and oppress may contribute to constructing these categories and the relationships between them as if they were monolithic, eternal and omnipresent. Like a snare trap that squeezes harder the more you pull against it, a struggle for liberation based on the very categorizations that forms a cornerstone of the oppression itself risk to not only fail to liberate but also locking people even further into the categories and some of the related oppressive structures.

A path to solving this threefold problem of categorization of human beings versus the universality of human rights could be to develop the concept of *categorism*⁸ into a inclusive and clear conceptual framework. The concept of categorism is simply “Prejudice, bigotry and discrimination, based on a categorization of people”. Concepts such as racism, sexism and homophobia are included in the concept of categorism: Each of them is simply a specific focus of categorism. The big weakness of this

⁸ Term and basic concept coined by myself in 2007. Cronström Beskow (2007a) and (2007b).

simple version of the concept is that it is limited to loosely defined concepts of prejudice, bigotry and discrimination. One can easily argue that racism, sexism and homophobia is so much more than can be covered by those three words alone.

As this study explores discourse relevant to categorization of human beings and the struggle for universal Human Rights, more concepts will be defined and given words of their own. For example “monolithization” for treating people categorized in a certain way as if they were a monolith, and “*dichotomism*” for black and white “either-or” thinking. Along with concepts such as “*marginalization*” and “*exploitation*”, they will be included in an expanded and refined conceptual framework of categorism. To solve the threefold problem of categorization of human beings versus the universality of human rights, this conceptual framework need to give a reasonably comprehensive overview of what categorism is, as applied to specific categories or to categorization itself. A unified definition based on categorization itself rather than specific categorizations, thus being inclusive while also free to analyze and criticize the various categorizations.

1.1. Aim

To develop the concept of categorism into a conceptual framework that solves the threefold problem of categorization of human beings versus the universality of human rights.

2. Theory and Method

This thesis is focused on language and social reality from a perspective of *social constructionism*. The basic principle being that language and all other aspects of human interaction have been socially constructed and is a continuous process of being socially constructed, and to various extents reproduced or reconstructed, through human thought and interaction. Social constructionism, as defined by Burr⁹, can be summed up in four major points:

First of all, it takes a critical stance toward “taken-for-granted knowledge”, the ways in which we understand the world and even ourselves. Our categories do not necessarily refer to any real divisions, and are always questionable.

⁹ Burr (2007), page 2-9

Second, it sees understanding of categories and concepts, and thus of the world and of all the other people that each of us share this world with, as existing in a historical and cultural context. It changes over time and between different social milieus.

Third, that knowledge is sustained by social processes. Our understanding of ourselves, each other and the world is something that we humans construct between us. The ways we see things, our perception of truth, are based engaging each other in social processes and interactions.

Fourth, that knowledge and social action are intertwined. How people treat each other depends on how they understand each other, and how they react to a behavior depends on how they conceptualize this behavior.

The human mind uses concepts to understand phenomena, and it uses terms (words, or combinations of words) to refer to concepts. A discourse on a subject is thus twice removed from the subject itself: First the step between the term and the concept that the word refers to, then the step between the concept and the phenomena that the concept refers to. A definition of a concept is not in itself true or false: It is always true by definition, and the question is instead to what extent this definition that is being used is or isn't a good and reasonable definition. Truth is something that societies have to work to produce¹⁰ - language is socially constructed as well as a constructive force.¹¹

To conceptualize a phenomenon is to understand it by assigning a concept to the phenomenon... or rather to [the phenomenon, as you understand it]. To refer to this concept, a word or phrase is needed. If the dictionary already contain a suitable word, this potential problem is automatically solved by using the dictionary definition (also known as “lexical definition”). If the word has many different uses as well, a precisising definition may be needed. If no suitable word exist yet, the options are to either use a stipulative definition (either to create a new word, or to assign a new meaning to word that already exist) or to settle for using a longer phrase to refer to the concept. What concepts and conceptualizations our language gives us access to we have access to greatly influence how we think¹²,

¹⁰ Mills (2005), page 16.

¹¹ Burr (2007), page 22 & 24.

¹² This is sometimes referred to as the “weak” version of the Sapir–Whorf hypothesis of linguistic relativity. The “strong” version being that language *determines* thought, rather than influences it. Reimer (2010), page 411-421

and language is permanently in a process of growing through constant development and change.¹³ Note that the same neologism can be both an invention and a discovery at the same time: Inventing the word for the concept, while discovering the phenomenon pinpointed by the concept.

For a word that refers to a concept for a phenomenon in nature, Aristotle argued in favor of simple descriptive definitions - arguing that the observation of the phenomenon itself should count as the real definition of the word.¹⁴ For example, the definition of thunder would be to see and hear lightning strike. This notion holds an important lesson, that we should anchor our conceptualizations of reality in the experienced reality that our concepts seek to describe. Yet, we should be careful with how far we trust our senses to be objective. As Immanuel Kant would later point out, our concepts are not inherently shaped by the world itself. Instead, our perceptions of phenomena in the world are shaped by the concepts in our own minds. We cannot have inherently objective knowledge of “the thing in itself”. We do have knowledge about the world, because we are part of the world and have senses that give us valid information. While valid, this knowledge is limited. We therefore need to use a combination of empiricism and reason – not relying on either one of them, and not mistaking ourselves for being a neutral objective observer who do not have a reference point.¹⁵ Kant describes the importance of reference point as follows: “*The situation here is the same as was that of Copernicus when he first thought of explaining the motions of the celestial bodies. Having found it difficult to make progress there when he assumed that the entire host of stars revolved around the spectator, he tried to find out by experiment whether he might not be more successful if he had the spectator revolve and the stars remain at rest.*”¹⁶ This would later be known as “Kant's Copernican revolution in philosophy”.¹⁷

Foucault has argued that we always see the world through *discourse*, a position that has sometimes been misconstrued into mistaking Foucault for disbelieving or disregarding the existence or relevance of *physical reality* itself.¹⁸ While constructionist perspectives see reality as relative to point of view, realist perspectives see it s objective. A hypothetical extremist position would deny the existence of physical reality (in the case of constructionism) or deny the fact that each person see the world from a subjective point of view (in the case of realism). Meanwhile, reasonable positions of realism and

¹³ Reimer (2010), page 372-373

¹⁴ Reimer (2010), page 63.

¹⁵ Atkinson (2011), page 171.

¹⁶ Kant (1996), page 21.

¹⁷ Stanford (2014).

¹⁸ Mills (2005), page 46.

relativism do not need to contradict each other. They merely having different focus.¹⁹ One such position of realism, compatible with social constructionism, is *Critical Realism* - which argues that while our senses doesn't mirror physical reality, they do reference it: The basis for our sensations is a coherent and dependently consistent reality.²⁰ While this thesis analyzes the realm of *social reality*, some points of the analysis does also touch on physical reality. Along with the social constructionism, these particular cases also utilizes a viewpoint of critical realism.

The concept of “discourse” is central to this study, as is the importance of distinguish it from the concepts of “identity”, “categorization” and “narrative”. The thesis analyzes existing discourses, proposing discursive changes in the form of adding new terms which are intended to be useful for anchoring the discourse in universality of human rights.

The dictionary definition²¹ of “discourse” is “the use of words to exchange thoughts and ideas”. As used by Michael Foucault, the word also refers to the underlying practice which brings forth a certain way of taking about things.²² The discourse is not limited to what is being said, but also includes what is left unsaid as well as that which is said indirectly through gestures and patterns of behavior.²³ This conceptualization of discourse is deeply intertwined with Foucault's conceptualization of knowledge and power. Power is a relationship, a part of social dynamics, something that exist within discourse and the eternal struggle for dominance between different discourses.²⁴ Power is not in itself a repressive force. On the contrary, repression is a sign of weakness – signifying that the discourse is not powerful enough to dominate without proponents resorting to violence. A much stronger form of power is the production of knowledge, the process of getting one's discourse accepted as truth.²⁵

To analyze discourses and how they give us a particular vision of the world and the humans we share it with is called deconstruction and discourse analysis.²⁶ Discourse analysis is sometimes divided into

¹⁹ Burr (2007), page 88 & 102.

²⁰ Burr (2007), page 95.

²¹ Merriam Webster (2004).

²² Foucault (1993), page 57.

²³ Foucault (2008), page 181

²⁴ Foucault (1990), page 92-102

²⁵ Burr (2007), page 67-69

²⁶ Burr (2007), page 18. Note that Burr calls it “Foucauldian discourse analysis, in order to distinguish it from other specific forms of discourse analysis – such as the ones here mentioned in the same paragraph.

more specific disciplines such as discourse theory, critical discourse analysis and discourse psychology.²⁷ In this particular division, discourse theory focuses on overview at a macro scale, analyzing social phenomena as an eternal struggle over definitions et cetera. At the other end of the spectrum, we find discourse psychology, which focuses on how discourses live within individual human beings as part of their ways of thinking and feeling about the world. This study discusses the micro level as well as the macro level, so while it doesn't apply discourse psychology it still draws inspiration from it. Discourse theory is applied more directly. A core concept of discourse theory is nodal points, which are the concepts around which other concepts are organized. In the discourse of this study, the primary nodal point is the concept of "human being". This concept is a category of living beings which include all humans (all individual humans, all of humanity as a whole), but not plants or animals. Meanwhile, nodal points that are concepts for specific categories of human beings, categorized by for example genders ("men", "women", "*trans persons*", "*queers*", and so on) or races/ethnicities ("white", "*racified*", "asian", and so on), are less central in the discourse of this study than in discourses it seeks to distance itself from: As these words only include parts of humanity, they are less inclusive and thus a less robust foundation for universal human rights. A core point is to make room for a discourse where prejudice, bigotry and discrimination are seen as matters of categorization (which are socially constructed and can be more or less arbitrary) rather than as a matter of categories (which would invite *essentialism*, the idea that categories are real in their own right – perhaps even more real than the actual human beings included in the categories). Thus resolving the third problem of categorization of human beings versus the universality of human rights, rather than reinforcing it.

Is a gender or skin-color merely a "category", or is it an "identity"? Or both? It really varies from person to person and from context to context. While "categorization" simply means dividing something (in this case human beings) into groups ("categories") by using some trait to distinguish them from each other, "identity" refers to a persons sense of "who I am" or "what I am". The words "category" and "identity" are sometimes used if they were synonymous, but this *co-definition* is avoided here. Instead, the intersection of categorization and identity (as well as gray areas between the two concepts, and the categorizations that may or may not be regarded as "identity" by the person thus categorized) is here called *cateity*. "Narrative" refers to the way we make sense and meaning of events and phenomena by turning them into stories or part of stories that we tell ourselves and each other. The act of building

²⁷ Winther Jørgensen & Phillips (2000), page 31 & 97.

such storytelling is here called *narrativization*. Narrative analysis analyzes this social construction of life and the world as stories, deconstructing these stories into their components.²⁸ This study uses narrative analysis indirectly, as a reference point for the dynamics of *internal realities* (built within each human being) and social realities (built between human beings). The concepts of *cateity*, internal reality and social reality are further explored in chapter six, “Multi-layered identities and realities”.

Regarding discourses, *cateities* and narratives, it is important to understand that they are intertwined with each other and thus partially include each other. Discourses are expressed and shaped through *cateities* and narratives: How people directly and indirectly talk about things is greatly affected by their sense of identity and by the narratives through which they make sense and meaning of people and situations. *Cateities* are expressed and shaped through discourses and narratives: Whether or not, and in what ways, a certain categorization is interpreted as someone's “true self” depend greatly on how we talk about things and on the narratives through which we create and give meaning to the categories. Narratives are expressed and shaped through discourses and *cateities*: How we build our storytelling to make sense of the world and give it meaning depend greatly on how we talk about things and on our sense of identity.

Being a theoretical study of concept development in the field of social constructionism, the main concerns for validity are what Burr calls usefulness and fruitfulness²⁹: “The power of the analysis to generate theory developments and novel explanations to cast further light on previous research findings.”

2.1. Ethics

The Swedish Research Council (“*Vetenskapsrådet*”) report on research ethics³⁰ has a set of general guidelines for all research. These guidelines can be summarized as Honesty, Openness, Orderliness, Consideration and Integrity. Honesty refers to being truthful in one's research: To neither exaggerate nor downplay findings, and also to reference the sources used. Openness refers to being open about one's methods, results and starting positions, as well as sources and commercial ties (if any). Orderliness refers to keeping gathered material such as surveys and interviews available for future

²⁸ Bergström & Boréus (2005), page 219.

²⁹ Burr (2007), page 159.

³⁰ *Vetenskapsrådet* (2011), page 12

research. Consideration refers to avoid causing harm. Integrity refers to being aware of one's tendencies and keeping one's bias in check so that interpretation of other people's research is as fair as possible, without canonizing or demonizing them.

The issues of honesty, openness and integrity are always important to keep in mind. Orderliness does not apply to theoretical studies such as this one, since there is no surveys, interviews or similar to keep track of and since the referencing of sources files under openness rather than orderliness. Consideration is a more complex issue. While the study does not have research subjects, it contain conceptualizations within a field of discourse where conceptualizations have great potential to help or harm. As conceptualizations are made throughout this thesis, careful consideration need to be taken so that the concepts are defined in ways that maximize their potential to be used in favor of human rights, understanding and respect, while minimizing their potential to be used to legitimize totalitarianism, pseudoscience, or harassment. Although all terms and concepts can be twisted in destructive ways or contain unforeseen flaws, one can minimize the risk by striving for clarity. (For example, Spivak's term “strategic essentialism” has often been hijacked to excuse actual essentialism.³¹) Ultimately, the 30:th and final article of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights provides the disclaimer needed here:

“Nothing in this Declaration [or thesis] may be interpreted as implying for any State, group or person any right to engage in any activity or to perform any act aimed at the destruction of any of the rights and freedoms set forth herein.”

2.2. Delimitations

Being focused on discourse and social reality, the thesis does not have room for exploring the depths of internal reality or of the interactions between physical reality and internal reality. Thus issues such as the relevance of neuropsychology are merely briefly mentioned, without any in-depth exploration. Another issue that has to be given much less space than it might deserve is the debate between universalism and relativism: Having limited relevance to the study, it is briefly mentioned but not studied in any greater detail. Furthermore, this study does not concern itself with notions of “universal, period” versus “relative, period”, but rather of “universal in what ways and to what extent, as well as relative in what ways and to what extent”.

³¹ Ritzer & Ryan (2011), page 619.

3. Structure of the Thesis

The following four chapters will explore research relevant to the problem of categorization of human beings versus the universality of human rights, culminating in a fifth chapter building an expanded conceptual framework of categorism on the analysis made throughout those first four chapters. Many concepts identified throughout these four chapters will be included as being facets or abstractions of categorism. Since these five chapters are preceded by this chapter and the two chapters before that, the five chapters are numbered chapter four to chapter eight.

The first of these chapters (4) presents a number of academical discussions about the human rights of people categorized in particular ways. The primary focus is on people being categorized as being of different cultures, discussed in terms of multiculturalism and cultural relativism. Including how this affects people through other categorizations, such as gender and social class. The texts included are meant to not only be a reasonably comprehensive overview of the discussion in the journal *Human Rights Quarterly*, but to also be reasonably representative of a somewhat wider sphere of discourse. The research presented in the chapter contextualizes the thesis in human rights discourse and provides several relevant concepts to be named and included in the categorism framework. The second chapter (5) explores two essays which both exemplify why it is not viable to analyze oppression through monolithic categories. These ideas are Crenshaw's concept of *intersectionality* and Young's concept of *The Five Faces of Oppression*. Both concepts show that struggle against oppression and against the many phenomena here conceptualized as different aspects of categorism can not be limited to struggle of specific categories of people.

The third chapter (6) goes deeper into the complexity of identities and realities. How people relate to themselves, to each other and to the world we all live in. How this is affected by thinking in categories and by categorizing the very border between ourselves and the surrounding world in what Hsu calls *Psycho-Social Homeostasis*. The fourth chapter (7) explores how essentialism stands in the way of understanding – promoting ignorance, prejudice and bigotry. Problems pinpointed by Dawkins, Leff and other thinkers included in this chapter. All four chapters provides concepts and insights needed for developing the conceptual framework of categorism in the fifth chapter (8). A final concluding chapter (9) discusses this framework as a solution to the threefold problem of categorization of human beings versus the universality of human rights, and looks forward towards future research.

4. Human Rights discourse regarding categorization of human beings

Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.

- Universal Declaration of Human Rights, article 2

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) calls for rights and freedom for everyone. It calls for rights and freedom for every person, “without distinction of any kind”. Discrimination and oppression, by any reasonable definitions of those words, rely on people being (explicitly or implicitly) divided into categories. In the struggles against discrimination and oppression, it may be problematic to embrace those same categorizations. To embrace them would validate this very foundation of discrimination and oppression, but to avoid them would make ongoing systems of discrimination and oppression invisible rather than make them go away.

Categories are not unproblematic. They do not necessarily represent any real division, and even the most taken-for-granted categories can be seen as more or less arbitrary social constructions.³² To categorize people and attach stereotypes to these categories is to define what it means to belong to that category, thus contributing to create not only your own knowledge of the people in the category but also their knowledge of themselves.³³ However, what it means to be a person could always be constructed differently.³⁴

Human rights are universal in the sense that they are equal for everyone³⁵, preferably without some being considered more equal than others. When people are treated differently because they have been defined as belonging to different categories, there are questions that should be asked and circumstances that should be examined. One set of guidelines proposed by Reichert provides the following five questions and three circumstances: “Who defines the cultural norms? Who benefits? Who loses?

³² Burr (2007), page 3.

³³ Gergen (1999), page 42-43.

³⁴ Burr (2007). page 48.

³⁵ Thulin (2008) page 20.

Whose voices are being heard? Whose voices are being silenced? Examine closely the history of the cultural practice. Examine the power brokers who determine the cultural norm. Analyze the cultural practice within a contemporary human rights standard.”³⁶

When people are treated differently because they have been defined as belonging to different categories (be it race, gender, culture or whatever), the people in such a group may have a lot to gain from a strategic essentialism of highlighting a mutual group identity. Yet, according to Lamb, activism based on group identity or group loyalty makes it challenging to embrace human rights, because identity or loyalty based on groups can only exist based on a division into us versus them which makes it easy to see everything as a zero sum game and hard to embrace the rights of “the other”.³⁷

There is much academic debate regarding cultural relativism versus universal human rights.³⁸ Some would dismiss human rights itself as being merely western culture for western people³⁹, something that “the west” should abstain from forcing upon other nations. Others would argue that “a moderate form of cultural relativism is a genuine intellectual achievement that helps combat ethnocentrism and allows one to better appreciate the full range of human experience”.⁴⁰ On a similar note, Ainesh Prasad argues that the concept of cultural relativism holds great potential to help us draw insights into cultural differences and dismantle harmful power relations, in spite of having been “violently hijacked by a small number of privileged elites in the third world who proclaim themselves as being the epistemological repositories for their nations”.⁴¹ Freeman makes a similar argument regarding elites, arguing that while trying to protect vulnerable cultures from cultural imperialism, cultural relativism risks protecting oppressive elites and thus collaborate in their oppression of the people in the culture that these well-meaning western relativists seek to protect⁴². Meanwhile, Åkesson warns of a one-sided kind of multiculturalism based on a division into an “us” who are constructed as having rationality and common sense versus a “them” who instead are constructed as having a “culture”.⁴³ Amartya Sen warns that “cultural diversity” risks becoming a matter of conserving whatever cultural patterns that happens

³⁶ Reichert (2006), page 104-106

³⁷ Lamb (2010), pages 1006-1007 and 999.

³⁸ Beside texts otherwise mentioned in this chapter, see also texts such as Sikka (2011), Lu (2004), Afshari (2001), Brannigan (2000), Tilley (2000) and Nowell-Smith (1971).

³⁹ Reichert (2006, page 109-111) argues that this particular brand of cultural relativism is “this era's fascism”.

⁴⁰ Schnapper (2009), page 175.

⁴¹ Prasad (2007), page 595.

⁴² Freeman (2011), page 110.

⁴³ Åkesson (2011), page 221.

to exist at the moment: Denying children their potential by confining them to cultural stasis, a multiculturalism that is actually a plural monoculturalism. He also argues that science, democracy and tolerance are global with roots that has developed globally over thousands of years – while Western countries deserve credit for their achievements in the last few centuries, they cannot claim the concepts to in any way be uniquely Western⁴⁴. Another reason for lack of confidence in the concept of Human Rights may, according to Ignatieff⁴⁵, be caused by, among other factors, western nations making interventions arbitrarily and unfairly in the name of human rights, failing to uphold actual human rights in a consistent and equal manner.

4. 1. Is multiculturalism bad for women?

One example of such debate is the book “Is multiculturalism bad for women?”⁴⁶, which is written as a point-counterpoint discussion between Okin and several people including Kymlicka who responds to her original essay. In this essay, which is the first part of the book, Okin argues that multiculturalism can be good or bad or a bit of both. At its best, multiculturalism is about treating humans of non-western origin as equal to humans of western origin – just like feminism is about treating women as equal to men, and the civil rights movement is about treating people of color as equal to white people. At its worst, however, multiculturalism is about denying women their equal rights: Demoting women to the property of men, and doing so in the name of cultural practices made by men for men. “Group rights” that does not benefit everyone in the group, but is instead done against certain categories and individuals within the group – notably often women. Okin urges the reader to examine inequalities within groups and to abstain from treating cultures as if they were monoliths.

The second part of the book consists of fifteen answers to Okin's text. Among these answers, Kymlicka agree that intragroup inequalities needs to be examined and that groups within groups need to be taken into account. Group rights are acceptable only when they are a tool for equality between groups, not when they are a tool for maintaining inequality within a group. He argues that a major problem with liberal theory is that it expects the citizen to be male as well as of the dominant language and culture. Honig argues that blaming one's oppressive behavior on “culture” is a call for privacy and privilege: A call that needs to be resisted not only for the sake of Human Rights but also for the sake of the culture,

⁴⁴ Sen (2007). Page 130, 116, 119, 156 and 50-53.

⁴⁵ Ignatieff (2001), page 47-48.

⁴⁶ Okin (1999), page 12, 23, 31, 33, 36, 61, 88, 98, 121, 131, 44.

since the culture does not benefit from being put in the role of being a justification for abuse. Sunstein argues that while the right to leave a religion is important, this does little to help children who has been brought up within the religion and indoctrinated to accept it uncritically. Meanwhile, al-Na'im argues that the problem with Okin's demand that minorities live up to the standards of the majority culture is that this doesn't put any pressure on the majority culture, that only the minorities are urged to change for the better. This notion is supported by Raz pointing out that it is always easier to judge another culture than one's own.

In the third part, Okin builds on the responses in the second part. Among other things, she concludes that leaders of groups have an interest in presenting their group as if it were monolithic (“a unified agent”), but that giving credence to such claims would be to side with those in power within the group against the marginalized within the group. Okin concludes the book with the following words: “What we need to strive toward is a form of multiculturalism that gives the issue of gender and other intragroup inequalities their due – that is to say, a multiculturalism that effectively treats all persons as each other's moral equals”. One criticism that Okin opted to ignore in her reply was al-Hibri's claim that western feminism is “patriarchal”. The claim is not backed by any argument that feminism would be patriarchal in any sense of the word patriarchal ever used by feminists, anthropologists, groups (religious or otherwise) defining themselves as patriarchal, or the general public. Instead, the claim is backed by the fact that al-Hibri has created her own personal definition of the word “patriarchy”: A definition that is not really about gender but instead the general concept of “a hierarchical system in which control flows from the top”.

There are two ways, radically different from each other, in which such criticism can reasonably be handled. One is to ignore it for being based on a word-play that doesn't make much sense and may fill the function of being an insulting trolling for emotional reactions and derailing the debate by introducing a equivocation where the same word suddenly has two widely different meanings at the same time. (In this case, calling something “patriarchy” not because this is a reasonable label for the intended concept but instead because the word “patriarchy” is a very loaded for feminists.) The other is to ignore the choice of label to instead focus on the phenomena that al-Hibri tries to conceptualize and awkwardly label as patriarchy. Giving it another label such as “*kyriarchy*” (coined by Schussler

Fiorenza⁴⁷) would solve the problems with calling it “patriarchy”, giving more room for the actual critique of Okin speaking on behalf of a dominant group (in this case western power rather than male power). Being of limited relevance to the main discussion in the book, the patriarchy labeling issue has been included in this analysis because it exemplifies problems of equivocation and how the need for having words for what you are trying to describe is often central for creating meaningful dialogue.

4.2. Relative universality of human rights

In another such debate, this time in the journal *Human Rights Quarterly*, Donnelly argues that human rights should be seen as “relatively universal” in the sense that they are agreed upon and that their implementation should take the local contexts into account.⁴⁸ Goodhart argues that they are neither universal nor relative, and that claims of universality undermine the legitimacy of human rights because people are still being excluded from the supposed universality.⁴⁹ To which Donnelly responds that human rights are both universal and relative, arguing that human rights are universal because they are legitimate rather than legitimate because they are universal.⁵⁰

The idea that the rights are “relatively universal” also means that they need to be interpreted in the context where they are being applied. The principle of non-discrimination means that we should treat all persons equally unless there are overwhelming evidence to the contrary, not that anything conceptualized as a person should get exactly the same treatment no matter what. For example, the UDHR grants everyone the right to vote in elections, yet we deny children this rights. However, a scientific consensus based on overwhelming evidence shows that children do not have the capacity needed to exercise such a right⁵¹, and that it is not in their interest⁵² to be burdened with the responsibility that comes with such power. Human Rights can also be seen as an expression of universal morality, seen by theorists such as Immanuel Kant, John Locke and John Stuart Mill as “inalienable, transcendental and inherent in all human beings.”⁵³

⁴⁷ Schussler Fiorenza (1992)

⁴⁸ Donnelly (2007), page 298.

⁴⁹ Goodhart (2008), page 191-192.

⁵⁰ Donnelly (2008), page 195.

⁵¹ While the exact pace of maturation may vary from child to child, all children go through the same basic development (Berk, 2010).

⁵² Nordenfors (2010)

⁵³ Kinley (2009), page 10.

4.3. Conclusions

To categorize human beings by culture is problematic, just like categorizing by race or gender or any other way of categorizing people. Every person belongs to many categories, not just one, and is thus involved in many different patterns of social structure. Categories and structures are not monolithic, and it would be a mistake to accept the premise that an elite (especially a self-appointed elite) of a category (such as a race, culture, ethnic group or the members of a certain religion) speaks for everyone in that category. While categorization is highly problematic, we also need it to highlight and counteract discrimination, oppression and so on against specific vulnerable groups. Ending categorization of human beings as such (or rather making underlying categorizations invisible) is therefore not an option.

Several of the phenomena here discussed deserve to have words of their own, in order to more easily refer to them. To confuse a discussion by using two different definitions of the same word at the same time is called equivocation. Treating categories of people as monoliths can be called monolithization. To talk about hierarchical power structures between categories of people is better called kyriarchy rather than patriarchy, since gender is not the only categorization that such hierarchies can be based on. Finally, the fact that every person belongs to more than one categorization is covered by the concept of intersectionality, which will be discussed in the next chapter.

5. Cracks in the monoliths: Oppression is not about the oppressed

There is a double problem with considering each group's oppression a unified and distinct structure or system. On the one hand, this way of conceiving oppression fails to accommodate the similarities and overlaps in the oppressions of different groups. On the other hand, it falsely represents the situation of all group members as the same.

Iris Marion Young, The Five Faces of Oppression

If essentialism is the idea that every category has an essence of its own, monolithization is the idea that every person included in the category is simply an expression of this essence. Two great blow against such monolithization was the concept of intersectionality and the model of “Five Faces Of Oppression”. This chapter will explore these two expressions of the idea that categories of people should not be treated as monoliths.

In her essay “Demarginalizing the intersection of race and sex: A Black feminist critique of antidiscrimination doctrine, feminist theory and antiracist politics”⁵⁴ from 1989, Kimberly Crenshaw coined the term intersectionality. Which means that each human belongs to more than one category and that the intersection between the categories can be more important than the individual categories – that the whole is more than the sum of the parts. Therefore, analysis that depends on one single categorization of people marginalize those who are already marginalized in more than one way. For example, black women will be marginalized not only in an analysis of sexism and gender oppression (which assumes that women are white), but also in an analysis of racism and racial oppression (which assumes that black people are men).

Highlighting the phenomenon of intersectionality by defining a concept for that phenomenon and a word for that concept has been extremely important for pointing out the existence of groups within groups and the need for a more complex categorization than simple monolithic blocks. This concept of intersectionality points towards the need for even more concepts to be given words of their own.

⁵⁴ Crenshaw (1989), page 40.

Monolithization, that a category is not only assigned an “essence” but also assumed to be monolithic in the sense that all people thus categorized are reduced to being expressions of that one single essence. Zero-category, the categories that are made invisible by being assumed – such as male in the case of gender and white in the case of skin-color. Categorism, highlighting that the phenomenon of racism and sexism is not limited to specific categories or categorizations.

In her essay “The Five Faces of Oppression⁵⁵” from 1990, Iris Marion Young argue that our understanding of oppression should not be focused on oppressed categories and groups. Doing so would give the false impressions that different oppressions are separate problems and that everyone in the category or group is affected in the same way. The model takes an intersectional approach, although without using the newly coined term, acknowledging that categories are not monolithic. Every person belong to many different categories, and may be affected in many different ways by many different social structures over their lifetime. Instead of dividing oppression into concepts such as racism, sexism and homophobia, Young argues that it should be divided into faces of oppression: Different ways in which the oppression is done, instead of different groups it is being done to. Young suggests five such faces: Exploitation, Marginalization, Powerlessness, Cultural Imperialism and Violence.

5.1. Conceptual frameworks

The concept of intersectionality uses a simple yet elegant conceptual framework. It is based on classic categorizations such as gender and race, but moves beyond viewing these categories as if they were independent concepts that real life human beings would merely be examples of. Instead, the categorizations are conceptualized as secondary to the actual human beings, intersecting each other in these human beings. Thus intersectionality and essentialism can never truly coexist with each other. While it is possible to envision an “essence” for any particular combination of categories, intersectionality is still inherently predisposed to shatter this essentialism as well by adding yet another relevant categorization to the analysis.

Youngs model is more vulnerable to essentialism, being based on dichotomies between two opposing abstractions – in this case the privileged and the oppressed. As the essay's initial conceptualization of

⁵⁵ Young (1990), page 37.

“oppression”, Young uses Marilyn Frye's definition⁵⁶: “an enclosing structure of forces and barriers which tends to the immobilization and reduction of a group or category of people”. By choosing such a definition, Young limits her conceptualization of oppression to a purely structural level. By definition it cannot be done to individuals, or be done by individuals. In this framework, it can only be done to categories of people, and only be done by categories of people.

Young acknowledges that belonging to a category of people, such as a gender or a race, does not mean that a person engages in oppressive behavior. Thus she makes a distinction between “oppressor” and “privileged”⁵⁷. The core of the conceptual framework is the division of all humans into the “privileged” who benefit from oppressive social structures even if they don't actively fight to build or maintain these structures, and the “oppressed” who are oppressed by the same structures. In this framework, a person cannot be oppressed without belonging to a group that is being oppressed. Groups are also conceptualized as by definition having a group identity: By definition groups create the persons who belong to them, rather than the other way around, regardless of whether the group membership is self-identified or imposed by others. The essay expands the concept of oppression into meaning: The five faces of what social structures do against the oppressed groups.

5.2. Young's five faces of oppression

*Exploitation*⁵⁸ is presented as oppression through systematically transferring power and resources from one group to another. The exploitation is not only a matter of the transfers themselves, but also a matter of social structures that builds on the exploitation, depends on the exploitation or justifies the exploitation. The same group can be exploited in several ways at once. For example in traditional American culture women are not only expected to support the lives and careers of their husbands, but also confined to jobs that give low status and low pay – yet the men doing their careers would not be able to do so unless these “lesser” jobs were done.

*Marginalization*⁵⁹ is presented as oppression through exclusion. Specifically, exclusion from the workforce. Being unwanted and therefore unemployable. This marginalization mean not only a bad

⁵⁶ Frye (1983), page 11

⁵⁷ Young (1990), page 39.

⁵⁸ Young (1990), page 45.

⁵⁹ Young (1990), page 49.

economic situation, but also two other problem. First, many systems of welfare strip the recipients on some of their freedoms and rights as citizens. Even if the marginalized people get a decent economic situation without drawbacks, the second problem still remains: Being excluded from the workforce also means exclusion from an important venue for contributing to society and for building personal skills, prestige and self-esteem.

*Powerlessness*⁶⁰ is presented as oppression through being forced to follow orders without being a part of making the decisions. This works on two levels. Actual orders, for example in the workplace. And indirect order, in the form of social norms and expectations. Young portray social norms as created for and by middle class white men, at the exclusion of the lower class, people of color, and women.

*Cultural Imperialism*⁶¹ is presented as oppression through making the actual lives of the oppressed invisible, while replacing them with stereotypes and othering: Constructing the culture of the privileged group as being “the culture, period” and constructing the cultures of the oppressed groups are constructed as deviations. The culture of the privileged group is portrayed with nuance, while the cultures of the oppressed groups are reduced to heavy-handed stereotypes. This duality creates the paradoxical sensation of being invisible and at the same time exposed. Two forms of stigmatization that in a way are each other's opposite, yet work in concert and reinforce each other. A central unfairness of this system is that while the oppressed group lack the means to spread it's culture to the privileged group, the privileged group has the means to impose its culture on the oppressed group. Thus the persons in the oppressed group learn to see themselves from the outside, and to judge themselves by the standards set by the dominant group.

*Violence*⁶² is presented as oppression through *systematic* violence. This does not include one person beating up another person at random or for personal reasons. Only systematic violence done by privileged people against oppressed groups is included in the definition. When it comes to violence as a face of oppression, the *actual* violence is a rather small part of the violence. A much larger part of the oppression through violence is the *fear* of violence: Being forced to live with the knowledge that you may be attacked at any time. Finally, a third aspect of violence as a face of oppression is the

⁶⁰ Young (1990), page 52.

⁶¹ Young (1990), page 55.

⁶² Young (1990), page 56.

acceptance of violence. Violence become normalized, and the victim rather than the perpetrator is seen as the cause of the violence. This is also one of the major strategies for upholding the Cultural Imperialism: When people deviate from the social norms, or question the social norms, any violent acts committed against them is dismissed as being their own fault.

5.3. Human Rights as a matter of Intersectionality and Faces of Oppression

Crenshaw's argument for intersectionality demonstrates that violations of human rights is not only done to specific categories of human beings, but also to intersections of multiple such categories. It highlights the importance of the second article of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights not limiting itself to protecting specific categories of human beings, but instead protects “*Everyone [...] without distinction of any kind*”. At the same time, it also highlights the need for making distinctions in order to highlight relevant categories and intersections: In order for the rights to truly protect everyone from violations of their rights, those made invisible by monolithic categorizations must be made visible.

Meanwhile, Young's models gives a brief overview of how the violations are done. While Young's model and the UDHR use different conceptual frameworks, they clearly point in the same direction and are fully compatible with each other. The UDHR speak of certain rights, while the five faces model speak of mistreatment or outright oppression that at best goes against the spirit of those rights and at worst violate them outright.

At the core of the five faces model, we find the principle that nobody should be oppressed: That oppression is not even about the group that is being oppressed, but rather about the people who are doing the oppressing.

At the core of the UDHR, we find the principle that nobody should be discriminated. The anti-discrimination principle that is the foundation of all Human Rights, as expressed in the form of the second article of the UDHR. All and any oppression, no matter who it is done against, goes against the very first article - “All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights”. Moving on from the basic underlying principle to the five faces themselves:

Exploitation goes against the spirit of Article 4 - “No one shall be held in slavery or servitude“. Exploitation and Marginalization goes against the spirit of Article 23 – the right to work and decent working conditions. Indirectly also Article 25 – the right to reasonable living conditions. Marginalization and Powerlessness goes against the spirit of Article 21 – the right to participate in government. This right must be seen as a defense not only against apartheid laws that would outlaw participation outright, but also against social structures that indirectly hinder actual participation.

Cultural Imperialism goes against the spirit of Article 18 - freedom of thought - and Article 19 - freedom of opinion and expression -, as it deprive oppressed people of the ability to freely exercise these rights. Any Marginalization or Cultural Imperialism that is sufficiently deeply rooted in society to shape its laws also goes against the spirit of Article 7 - “All are equal before the law and are entitled without any discrimination to equal protection of the law”. As well as Article 22 – the right to be included in society and develop one's own personality, and Article 30 – that exercising your rights does not include destroying the rights of others.

Violence goes against the spirit of Article 3 - “Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person.” - and Article 5 - “No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.”

Going beyond the UDHR itself into other Human Rights declarations and conventions by the United Nations, the ICCPR, ICESCR and CAT⁶³ would be especially relevant to the five faces. Clearly the struggle against oppression, as conceptualized by Young, is a struggle for human rights.

⁶³ "International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights", "International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights" and "Convention Against Torture")

5.4. The fluidity of groups and oppression

Young note that groups exist only in relation to other groups.⁶⁴ These groups are often originally formed by some people defining themselves against other people. Defining themselves merely as normal, this in-group create the out-group by defining it and treating it accordingly. The definition of the out-group becomes the inverted definition of the in-group, and thus the in-group becomes a group in it's own right.

Social categorizations changes with time. Take for example being right-handed or left-handed. Most people are right-handed, but the idea that left-handed people would be lesser, different or in league with the devil is a thing of the past, a topic for satire.⁶⁵ In contemporary society, it can be reasonable to no longer consider left-handed people a social group, oppressed or otherwise. They are merely normal people with a slightly unusual use of hands. The issue of rights for left-handed people is normally merely a matter of making sure that tools are designed so they may be used with either hand. Tools that are for right-handed people only is not a problem, as long as hand-neutral or left-handed versions are also easily available. While “oppression” is too strong a word for this context, the concept of “discrimination” may still need to be discussed at times. Likewise, prejudice and bigotry against left-handed people still exist - although not nearly as widespread as it once was.

It would therefore be a mistake to conceptualize a category of people as being inherently or eternally oppressed or privileged. Instead, it varies with time and place and social context. It should also be noted that “power” is not an absolute that a person or group either have or do not have. Instead, it is a fluid continuum that exist between people. Instead of asking who has “the power”, we should ask who have how much power, of what kinds and in what ways, based on what categorizations and what other factors. In an abstract analysis, it is easy to see a category of people as either privileged or oppressed and to assume that the category is seen as either normal or deviant. Yet, the transitions between such positions are gradual process. It is not a matter of a group either being oppressed or not and either “seen as deviant” or not, but rather sliding scales. An analysis limited to dichotomies cannot grasp such greyscales.

⁶⁴ Young (1990), page 40.

⁶⁵ Levine (2008)

5.5. Summary

Young and Crenshaw argue against conceptualizing oppression as a matter of monolithic categorizations such as race and gender. While Crenshaw argue what we should look at race *and* gender rather than race *or* gender, Young argues that we should look at *how* the oppression is done rather than by what categorization it is done. As will be explored in the chapter on Categorism, these two solutions points towards two different aspects the conceptual framework of categorism: That there are many different foci and many different facets.

Crenshaw and Young are both moving away from the old model based on dividing people into categories and dichotomies: Crenshaw deconstructs the system by letting categorizations clash with each other, while Young moves the focus away from the traditional categorizations of people. Yet, both models are still limited to dichotomous categorizations of people. In Crenshaw's case multiple dichotomies at once. In Young's case replacing dichotomies of race and gender by a dichotomy of privileged versus oppressed. While an improvement, dichotomies as such are still a very limited tool for understanding - as the chapter on essentialism will explore.

The five faces of oppression as stipulated by Young are Exploitation, Marginalization, Powerlessness, Cultural Imperialism and Violence. Each of these faces corresponds to violations of Human Rights, as expressed in the Universal declaration of Human Rights. The five faces will be integrated in the system of “facets of categorism” in the categorism chapter.

6. Multi-layered identities and realities

*Life may be a big insanity,
but love will conquer hate to all eternity.
Don't you know, we are strong?
Life may be a big insanity,
but there is more to life than reality,
'cause our hearts, make us strong.*

- **Sandra**, (Life may be) A big insanity⁶⁶

This chapter will explore the concepts of reality and identity. These two concepts are central to how human beings relate to themselves, to each other, and to the world around them. A nuanced understanding of these concepts is thus needed to gain a nuanced understanding of the phenomena of categorism.

6.1 In what sense do categories exist?

As we have seen in previous chapters, categorization of human beings are central to much of human rights discourse – yet deeply problematic. How should we view categorization as such? In his book “The Greatest Show on Earth”, Dawkins argues that while evolution is real it is also hard to understand. People think in categories. Yet, categories do not exist - and the belief in them makes reality harder to understand⁶⁷. He argues that essentialism, which he calls “the dead hand of Plato”, is what keeps people from understanding evolution. Human language divides animals into different species, although species of animals do not exist in physical reality. In physical reality, only individual animals exist. In the platonist worldview, each individual animal is nothing more than a shadow of the “idea” of the species. This worldview shackles our understanding of animals into monolithic concepts of species, thus making it impossible for us to understand transitions and intermediate forms – when the truth is that every animal that exists is a transitional form, and that the division into species is more or less arbitrary. By this argument, Dawkins is indirectly making a strong case for Social Constructionism being highly relevant not only in social science but also in natural science: While our

⁶⁶ The song “(Life may be) A big insanity” is available at for example https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vdvd_tySWqM

⁶⁷ Dawkins (2010), page 29-34.

concepts doesn't exist in physical reality, they do affect – and in some cases distort – our perception of it. We must therefore keep ourselves aware of them.

Categories are a central part of human lived experience. Dawkins' notion that categories doesn't exist may thus be hard to understand, unless we make a clear distinction between different layers of reality. Each human being can be said to exist in three very different layers of reality. These are the physical reality that we all share, the internal reality that is unique to each brain, and the multitudes of social realities that people weave between each other. These layers are built on very different building blocks: Physical reality is built on atoms and energy, internal realities are built on thoughts and emotions, while social realities are built from multiple human minds who are more or less indirectly interacting with each other. These layers are in constant interaction and intersection with each other.⁶⁸

Being intertwined with each other and constantly affecting each other, the three layers of reality are very easy to mistake for being one single unified reality. Yet, these three layers of reality operate in very different ways and on very different premises. Physical reality exists independently of human beings. Internal realities, in sharp contrast, exists entirely dependent on the individual human being. Social realities, being built between human beings, exists independently of the continued existence of any one individual mind, but never independently of individual minds as such. Each of us experience internal reality from the inside. Through our senses and hands, we experience and shape physical reality. Through communication with other people, we together experience and shape social realities. Human beings are social beings who cannot exist alone, yet each human being is ultimately confined to the inside of one single human brain. We reach each other through physical reality and through social reality. When we speak to each other, the speech consists of soundwaves in the air and well as of social conventions that transform the sounds into meaningful words. The soundwaves themselves exist only in physical reality, while the language that make the sounds meaningful exist only in social reality. Words do not exist in physical reality: Only patterns such as soundwaves in the air, black ink on white paper, or colored pixels on a computer screen. Physical objects (including human bodies) do not exist in social reality: Only the concepts, words, symbols, metaphors and so on that we use to interact with them. All human understanding, including the understanding of physical reality, goes through concepts developed in internal and social realities. The problem with the platonist model is not with holding

⁶⁸ System theory (Beskow, Palm Beskow and Ehnvall 2013, pages 27 and 109-119) describes humans and their surroundings as an infinite number of communicative systems.

ideas in the highest regard, but instead with monolithization and with failing to distinguish between social reality and internal reality. The worlds of ideas exist through human minds, not independently of human minds. They are a myriad of worlds, and every human being has some of them within reach. Ideas are not a single world that only a special elite can reach. And while we human beings on this planet earth all live in one single physical reality, we live in many different social realities. Spun between human minds as they are, there might be a higher number of social realities than there is people in the world, given that most individuals interact with more than one other individual and in more than one way. When two persons or groups have different concepts for a phenomena, one concept might be more accurate than the other. But if so, it is because this concept provides a more on-target or nuanced portrayal of the part of physical, internal or social reality it seeks to describe. Not because one concept comes from a True Philosopher who is in touch with the One True World of Ideas, while the other concept does not.

While categories do not exist in physical reality, they do exist in internal and social realities. In internal realities, each human mind can categorize and re-categorize. Taking shortcuts through stereotypes, or examining from different angles and perspectives. Categories and categorization exist in internal reality only as something that people do, not as something that has any existence beyond that. However, the interaction between internal and social reality is quite complex: While the same stereotype may exist in an internal and a social reality, it exists in them on very different premises⁶⁹. In social realities, categories and stereotypes are debated, negotiated, and passed on between people. They may exist as social norms, conventions and structures. The same is true for language and discourse, knowledge and assumptions, stories and beliefs, identities, and so on. Each human being has the power to make up new words, or definitions of existing words. Create new stories and beliefs, build new identities, find new perspectives on the realities we live in. Some of these projects gain wider social acceptance, while others do not. This process can be more or less liberating or oppressive. It can also be more or less in harmony with understanding ourselves, each other, and the realities we live in. The wisdom of a single mind can overturn the fallacies of an entire society, and the wisdom of a society can help overturn the fallacies of a single mind. To blindly dismiss or embrace an idea would be a mistake, whether the idea is new or old and whether it comes from a huge collective or from a single individual.

⁶⁹ Hinton (2003). Page 57-82 for stereotypes as a cognitive phenomena, page 147-160 or stereotypes as a cultural phenomena.

In internal realities, categories and dichotomies are a big part in how the person thinks (in internal reality) and thus acts (in physical and social reality). This ability to categorize is central to the cognitive capacity⁷⁰ and development⁷¹ of humans or any other animal. Conceptualizing and categorizing sensory input is how the brain makes sense of information. It is also a matter of saving time and energy: If it wasn't for using our categories to quickly and effortlessly jumping into conclusions, we would constantly have to re-learn everything while living in a fragmented and incomprehensible world.⁷² Categories and other abstract concepts are therefore not only tools for our thinking, but necessary and unavoidable tools. It is part of who we are as human beings. Categorization is an active process, where we use language to make the world comprehensible by giving names to phenomena.⁷³

In social realities, commonly accepted categories and dichotomies are central in systemic patterns of how people usually think and act, in social norms for how people are expected and supposed to think and act, and in social structures for how people are encouraged to think and act. Once people are considered a category, it may be in their best interest to build a mutual identity even if they have nothing in common – a “strategic essentialism”⁷⁴. It is the categorization of the individual human person that is socially constructed, not the person herself. Yet, this categorization may change how she feel and think about herself, thus indirectly changing the person herself⁷⁵. We humans use categories to understand the world, and we use categories of humans to understand ourselves.

Labels, identities. “Who are you?” “Are you one of us - or one of them, those who are not us?” Categorization of human beings is a core of identity: The process of finding oneself in perceived likenesses and differences to others. It is also a core of whether or not a person or phenomena is seen as a problem⁷⁶. Many psychological experiments have shown how terribly easy it is to divide people into “us” and “them”. Perhaps most famous is the “Brown Eyes, Blue Eyes” experiment, in which children easily learned to view themselves and each other as inferior or superior based on the color of their

⁷⁰ Murphy (2002)

⁷¹ Berk (2010)

⁷² Pan & Sakagami (2012), page 1083.

⁷³ Johansson & Lalander (2013) page 78.

⁷⁴ As coined by Spivak. See Ritzer & Ryan (2011), page 619.

⁷⁵ Hacking (1999), page 11 and 27.

⁷⁶ Loseke (2010), page 15

eyes⁷⁷. Such changes in self-image affects not only how people treat each other, but also how they treat themselves – often limiting their capacity to fit a stereotype about the category⁷⁸. We humans tend to see a category of people as a prototype for an individual from that category. This leads to a process which in Self-Categorization Theory is called “depersonalization”: As we see human beings – ourselves as well as other individuals – as representations of the prototypes, we fail to see ourselves and each other as the complex and unique human beings that we actually are.⁷⁹

Stereotypes are further reinforced when a person form his perception of a category on the individuals from that category he encounters: Not only may these individuals reflect his stereotypes about them back to him, but there is also likely to be a pre-selection of what individuals he encounter in the first place, and what individuals he perceive as members of the category. A person who does not seem to fit the stereotype will not be assumed to belong to the category, and may not out herself unless she have to. Thus, there is a systemic representation bias. Even when a division into categories is entirely arbitrary and nonsensical, persons who see themselves as belonging to a certain category will still be inclined to favor fellow members of this group over those who don't belong to it.⁸⁰

It would be unwise of individual human beings to mistake their own concepts of categories for being eternal and inherently more objective than other people's point of view. Or to mistake those other points of view for inherently having to be true for oneself: The mere fact that something feels right makes it true in internal reality, and perhaps in a specific set of local social realities, but not in physical reality or in all social realities.

⁷⁷. One of many sources to learn more about this experiment is the documentary “A Class Divided” (PBS 2003).

⁷⁸ Spencer (1999).

⁷⁹ Hogg & Vaughan (2008), page 408-409

⁸⁰ Tajfel (1970).

6.2. Psycho-Social Homeostasis as gradual layering of identity

It would be tempting to draw a clear, clean and simple line between internal reality and external reality. Yet, the transitions between internal reality and the two kinds of external reality (physical and social) is a gradual process. The transition between internal reality and social reality can be explored through Francis L. K. Hsu's model "Psycho-Social Homeostasis"⁸¹. This model conceptualizes this transition as a system with seven degrees of separation between the most deeply internal and the most distantly external. Layer 7 and 6 are the unconscious and the precocious of Freudian terminology. Layer 5 is the "unexpressible conscious" while layer 4 is the "expressible conscious". Layer 3 is that which we identify with so much that we make it a part of ourselves. Layer 2 is relationships of all kinds – not part of ourselves, but a close interaction with ourselves. Layer 1 is our surrounding society, while level 0 are other societies that we are not a part of.

Central to this model is that the same things may be placed at different layers by different cultures. Hsu exemplify by cultural differences between American and Chinese culture. For example with Chinese culture putting family closer to heart (resulting in less personal development, as people have less reason to push themselves to be likable and interesting) and with American culture putting religion closer to heart (resulting in more conflicts over religious beliefs) as well as putting pets closer to heart (resulting in phenomena such as pet cemeteries and expensive healthcare for those animals who are pets). These patterns are patterns of social expectations about who the individual should care about, and how much. In "Precarious Lives", Judith Butler argues that post-9/11 American culture has developed strict norms for what human beings can or can't be mourned: Caring about a person's death becomes socially appropriate or socially inappropriate, depending on the victims ethnicity⁸².

While Hsu only discuss national cultures, the scale can be applied to differences between different subcultures as well as between different individuals. To identify with a category or other abstract concept can be more or less internalized, as well as more or less imposed from the outside. These two scales are separate from each other: An identity can be strongly imposed or strongly internalized, it can be both, and it can be neither. It is also questionable how strongly imposed or internalized a category or other abstract concept need to be in order to count as an "identity". Or perhaps better yet count as a "cateity" - combining the words "categorization" and "identity" into one word that signifies the

⁸¹ Hsu (1971)

⁸² Butler (2011), page 37-63.

intersections and transitions of both concepts.

What does it even mean to “be” a certain concept and category? Race, gender, religion, political views encoded into words ending in “ism”, sexual categories defined as orientations, and so on: How deeply internalized is such a category, on a scale of Psycho-Social Homeostasis? The answer is that it varies from person to person and from context to context, shifting over time and with state of mind. Any category may be a set of theoretical viewpoints for one person, a personal identity or purely social group membership for another person, both for a third person, and neither for a fourth person. It becomes easy to confuse the act of living a sensation in internal reality and the act of building a mutual story in social reality with the act of trying to understand a part of physical reality. As the three acts become intertwined, it becomes harder to understand people beyond our own social circle and to understand the multitude of realities we all live in. It may also become harder to understand oneself.

One way to minimize understanding and maximize hatred, is to build what Amartya Sen calls the illusion of singular identity, or of singular categorization⁸³. Each person actually have many different identities. The illusion is to present one identity, one categorization, as primary above all others: As if a person could be reduced to being for example a woman, gay, a Muslim OR a liberal, when she might actually be all of these things at once. To put one categorization on a pedestal like that is to create the ground for hatred and violence, by dividing the people as if they were two separate groups rather than one single complex web of intersecting categories. It should be noted that Sen uses only the common words “categorization” and “identity”, not the neologism “category”. However, he uses the words as if they were synonymous and interchangeable. This usage of the word identity is problematic, since different individuals and groups may put the same categorization on different stages of the scale of Psycho-Social Homeostasis: A person who accept being categorized in a certain way may or may not accept this as also being an identity.

⁸³ Sen (2007), page 46.

6.3. Flat world identity in layered reality

Each human being live in the world of physical reality as well as in worlds of social realities. As an example, lets take the shape of the world. Whether it is round or flat depends on our concept of “world”, and this concept depends on what social reality we live in. The physical object we call “Planet Earth” is shaped like a sphere, although not a perfect one. We know this to be true because of evidence. We trust the evidence because it is reasonable to assume that the physical universe exists, is not inherently deceptive, and does not revolve around any particular person or group⁸⁴. If the concept of “world” equals the phenomena of “Planet Earth”, then the world is undeniably round. This is also the most reasonable conceptualization of “world”, but only because we live in a culture that is global but not spacefaring. A local culture or a spacefaring culture may find it more reasonable to conceptualize “world” as “the local valley” or “the local solar system”... both of those being flat, a flatness that is just as objectively true in physical reality as the roundness of Planet Earth.

One such local culture is the Makuna in the Amazons rainforest. In the traditional beliefs of this culture, world as they define it ends at certain local landmarks⁸⁵. They are aware that there are people living beyond the horizon, but those people are conceptualized as living in other worlds. This particular belief is not only a part of social reality, but also compatible with the facts about physical reality. If a person who's world end at the horizon and a person who's world is planet earth find themselves disagreeing over whether the world is flat or round, they may simply be engaging in a equivocation, talking past each other over the meaning of the concept of world. While it would be wrong to see one conceptualization as inherently more true than the other, it would also be wrong to tell a person that if he is born Makuna or identifies as Makuna, then his world should forever end at the horizon. Identities and perspectives should be seen as something that people have, not as something that people are or can be reduced to. To adopt an attitude of “you are Makuna, thus there shouldn't be a world beyond the horizon for you” can be seen as *reduction* and *soft supremacism*. Reduction, in the sense that it reduce actual people to something more abstract. Supremacism in the sense that it positions the other as de facto inferior, even if this supremacism is softened by a coating of condescending “respect” - as opposed to the hard supremacism of using the same kind of reduction of dismissing persons of Makuna heritage in a more straightforward manner.

⁸⁴ Deriving the first assumption from Critical Realism, the third from Social Constructionism, and the second assumption from both sources. That the universe is “not inherently deceptive” means that knowledge about the universe is possible and that we should respect evidence. It also means that different points of view may both be compatible with the facts.

⁸⁵ Århem (1993), page 22-23.

6.4. Summary

Reality can be divided into three layers: The physical reality we all share, the internal realities that exist within the physical brain of each human being, and the social realities built between these internal realities. While very different from each other, these three layers are intertwined and hard to distinguish from each other. The transitions between them are gradual. Each human mind exists in internal reality, but reaches other human minds through physical reality and social reality. Each human mind exist in its own right, not merely an expression of physical or social reality. However, the separation between the internal and the external is a sliding scale, not a dichotomy between absolutes. How internal or external something is varies from person to person as well as from culture to culture.

Categories do not exist in physical reality, but affect us greatly in internal and social realities. To what extent a certain categorization is also an identity varies from person to person. Categorization as identity or potential identity can be called cateity. To pressure people to adopt one single cateity as the only relevant one divides a population that is actually a complex web of intersecting groups. To plow such chasms into a populations understanding of itself creates fertile ground for categorism.

7. Dichotomism, Categorism and Narrativism: The chains of essentialism

*I feared not in the Ivory Tower,
imprisonment you'll find:
It lies within your heart, your soul,
your spirit and your mind.*

- **Blackmore's Night**, Ivory Tower⁸⁶

This chapter will expand on the problems with seeing the world in black and white dichotomies between monolithic categories. As mentioned in previous chapters, these tendencies are here called dichotomism and monolithization. They will now be explored through arguments made in the essay “The Tyranny Of The Discontinuous Mind.”⁸⁷ by Richard Dawkins and the book “The Tyranny of Concepts: A Critique of Marxism”⁸⁸ by Gordon Leff. In his essay, Dawkins argues against black and white thinking. He argues against getting stuck in concepts. Arguing that most things are sliding scales rather than “either-or” by showing case after case where the strict dichotomies may look good at a distance but crumbles at the first sign of closer scrutiny:

Our language is ill-equipped to deal with a continuum of intermediates. Just as people must lie below or above the poverty ‘line’, so we classify people as ‘black’ even if they are in fact intermediate. When an official form invites us to tick a ‘race’ or ‘ethnicity’ box I recommend crossing it out and writing ‘human’.

Dawkins call this phenomenon “The tyranny of the discontinuous mind”, a linguistic construct that positions “the tyranny” and “the discontinuous mind” as absolutes: It is easy to interpret “the tyranny” as something that either is or isn’t” and “the discontinuous mind” as something that a mind either is or is not. This construct has at least two problems.

⁸⁶ The song “Ivory Tower” is available at for example <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=txM7sQ1fo5Q>

⁸⁷ Dawkins (2011).

⁸⁸ Leff (1969).

One is that the concept of “The tyranny of the discontinuous mind” is too important to be stuck with a six words long name. It needs a form that can easily be used *in* a sentence, rather than *as* a sentence. The other is that the concept becomes an example of itself when it is presented as if it is something that people either are or are not. (Or rather, that the conceptualization of the phenomenon becomes an example of the phenomenon.) Just like the old joke that there are two kinds of people in the world: Those who divide everybody into two kinds of people, and those who don't. The phenomenon needs to be conceptualized in a way that gives room for sliding scales. Discontinuous thoughts within minds, rather than minds themselves being discontinuous.

Getting stuck in black and white thinking, in either-or, in dichotomies and absolute concepts - lets call it “dichotomism”. This dichotomism is to get one's discourse stuck in black and white “either-or” thinking. Getting stuck in specific dichotomies or in dichotomies as such. Mistaking abstract concepts and categories for being the complex realities they describe. Note that it is only about getting stuck. To use a dichotomy is not inherently dichotomism. It becomes dichotomism when it gets stuck, when it changes from being a tool for understanding into being a prison for the mind – to trap oneself and/or others. Note also that dichotomism is something that people do rather than something people is, and it is something that the same person can do to various extents in different areas or at different times. It can be done more or less innocently, and it can be done more or less on purpose. It can be done to oneself as well as others. Making one's own mind more rigid, or manipulating others into rigid thinking that make them easier to control.

Dichotomism is closely intertwined with totalitarianism. “The Dead Hand of Plato” should be seen in the context of Plato's political philosophy being totalitarian and deeply antidemocratic.⁸⁹ In his book “The Tyranny of Concepts: A Critique of Marxism⁹⁰”, Leff argues that the main problem with Marxist thought is that it never analyzes the communist party or the working class. The problem is one of dichotomism: Leff argue that Marxism is all about “The Communist Party” as an idealized abstract concept, and all about “The Working Class” as an idealized abstract concept. In both cases neglecting to analyze the dynamics of the real life communist party and the real life working class, both consisting of human beings who are diverse and flawed just like human beings in general are.

⁸⁹ Popper (1998), page 86.

⁹⁰ Leff (1969).

“The lesson of the failure of Marxism is that of any orthodoxy. The personal insights of the founder become lost and only its formal expression remains. Taken for reality it encloses its adherents within it. If Marxism is to be revitalized, the condition is to dispense with the system and rethink its assumptions. Marxism could then, in ceasing to be the truth, once again join the search for truth, which has no exclusive repository.”

What Leff describes is truly the failure of any Great Story. Not only of a certain Marxist Great Story featuring “The Party” and “The Working Class” as the heroes of this particular narrative. But the inherent failure of any Great Story that “explains everything” as abstract concepts. The problem is not a matter of using abstract concepts, but rather a matter of limiting oneself to those concepts. In the same way as a Marxist/Communist orthodoxy may do monolithization to the concept of The Working Class, a Liberal/Libertarian orthodoxy may do similar monolithization to the concept of The Individual. Supposedly representing all humans, this individual-in-the-singular may very well just happen to be white, male, heterosexual and so on with good economic and social situation. When humans are divided into binaries such as male versus female, white versus people of color, heterosexual versus homosexual and so on, they can be constructed as one of them being the norm and the other as being a deviation from the norm.⁹¹ In such a dichotomy, the norm can be made invisible. It becomes the *zero-category*: The category which is not seen as being a category at all, but instead seen simply as being normal.⁹² It can be a matter of only women being seen as having a gender and only people of color being seen as having a race. This is also known as the act of “*racifying*” people.’

The invisibility of the zero-category makes it easier for society to stand up only for white middle-class women, while claiming to stand up for all women. To defend male supremacy over women, heterosexual supremacy over non-heterosexuals, or even defend a dictator's supremacy over the entire population, as long as it is done among people of color or within a non-western culture. At the same time, a vulnerable and marginalized person who doesn't belong to a sufficiently established minority group may be made invisible along with the zero-categories he belong to. Every category can be seen

⁹¹ Bromseth, J. & Darj, F. (2010) page27-28.

⁹² For example, Åkesson (2011) criticizes (page 221) Swedish multiculturalism for constructing “culture” as something that “the other” has, while the “us”, the normal Swede, is instead rational.

as a matter of borders for what is included or as a matter of essence of what the category really means.⁹³ With or without equivocations, the discursive act of defining concepts can be an act of making people impossible to understand rather than easier to understand.⁹⁴ Such *incomprehensibilization* is a powerful tool for stigmatizing those that are rendered incomprehensible. For example, by creating a discourse that defines all rights activism as being unreasonable extremism one may also manage to position all protests against oppression as being incomprehensible outbursts “coming from nowhere”⁹⁵.

An example of invisibilization and incomprehensibilization is the Birth Certificate issue in countries such as Indonesia. Many do not have a birth certificate, which is needed to attend school, get the ID card needed to participate in elections or get the passport needed to leave the country. Government officials portray the issue as being a simple administrative detail⁹⁶, concealing the underlying structural oppression of various minorities such as those who are poor or belong to religious minorities.⁹⁷ The opposite of zero-category may be called abyss-category. As norms are defined by their deviations and these deviations are conceptualized as categories of people, society itself may point to certain categories as being the ultimate deviation for everyone to define themselves against. Such an “*abyss-category*” of contemporary mainstream western society can be nazis, fascists or pedophiles – thus the concept of “Godwin's Law”, the sarcastic remark that “As an online discussion grows longer, the probability of a comparison involving Nazis or Hitler approaches 1.”⁹⁸ In a more religious society, the abyss-category may instead be atheists, witches, or anyone who believes in a slightly different version of the mainstream theology. For example with Protestants and Catholics considering each other to be the spawn of the devil, or with Sunni and Shia Muslims feeling the same way about each other.

Monolithization is a key part of dichotomism: The black-and-white thinking of dichotomism require, or at least strongly encourage, the concepts to be monoliths. Leff makes a dichotomy between being “The Truth” and being a viable tool in “the search for truth”. This distinction goes to the very essence of how we use a Great Story: Do we use it as a tool to understand the world, or do we demand that the world conform to The Story?

⁹³ Börjesson & Palmblad (2008) page 37 & 42.

⁹⁴ Kulik (2005), page 98-99.

⁹⁵ This example is further explored in Wetherell and Potter (1992), page 150-154.

⁹⁶ Shrestha (2012)

⁹⁷ Nugraha (2013)

⁹⁸ Godwin (1994)

7.1. Narrativism and Great Stories

Cateities such as Marxism, Liberalism and Christianity can be seen and treated as narratives and narrative frameworks: Great Stories about who we are and what the world revolves around – thus also frameworks for all stories about ourselves and our world. Narratives about conflicts such as between oppressed versus privileged, individual versus tyranny, or Good versus Evil. Such perspectives, great and small, are always produced, reproduced and modified.⁹⁹ This process can be called *narrativization*.

Discourse and narrativization are intertwined with each other, since concepts and ways of talking about things are central to how the stories are built and communicated. It may, for example, be popular in a country to portray this country as being, and always having been, The Good Guys. Even when a lot of things that has objectively happened in physical reality does not at all fit into this narrative. To build such a story contrary to facts does not have to require outright lies: It can be done through building a discourse that casts the country in such a positive light and merely implies that the historical facts are consistent with the story.¹⁰⁰ Using discourse analysis to uncover underlying narratives opens up interesting possibilities for intersections with narrative analysis. Just like discourse can fall into dichotomism, so can narrativization fall into narrativism - which is to put the story above all else. To ignore all facts that does not conform to the story or declare things to be true on the merit of fitting the story. To dehumanize actual human beings, treating them not as actual persons with their own thoughts and needs but rather as background decorations or as narrative devices.

In the roleplaying theory of Edwards¹⁰¹, the word narrativism has positive connotations. This version of the concept is compatible with the definition given above, except that it is limited to fiction. Putting the story above all else is not a bad thing when it is done to the characters of a fictional story rather than to actual human beings with actual needs. Only real humans have real rights, and therein lies the difference between authors and dicators: It is not a crime to let a fictional person or population suffer or perish for the sake of dramatic tension and building a good story. It is not untrue to declare a fictional world to be any way you prefer it to be. Putting the story above all else is not dishonest when it is done to a world that doesn't exist in physical reality, but only exists in internal and social realities where it exist only to be the setting for the story. It is all good and well to have your own story, your own

⁹⁹ Kahneman (2011), pages 199-209.

¹⁰⁰ An example of how discourse is used to promote such a story in this way can be found in Johansson (2008), page 154.

¹⁰¹ Edwards (2003)

narrative. But it is problematic to put it above other people's stories and narratives, or to put it above the physical reality through which you share the world with other people.

A ScienceFiction author once explained that the starships travel “at the speed of plot¹⁰²”. The speed they travel at is the speed required to arrive just in time. Nothing more, nothing less. Unless, of course, the plot require them to arrive too late. In a fictional universe, the laws of nature might not be required to be any more stringent than such narrativism. In this universe where we do live, however, the universe exists independently of us and our preferences for how it ought to be. This makes such narrativism incompatible with truth and honesty, when it is applied to the real world. It is the essence of totalitarianism, as described by George Orwell in the how many fingers” thought-experiment of his novel 1984.¹⁰³ Briefly put, an authority figure holds up four fingers and explains that the actual number of fingers being held up is whatever number The Party says it is. If the party says five, it is five. He then tortures the protagonist. Not for the purpose of making him merely say five, but for the purpose of bringing him to the point where he truly believes it to really be five. The same kind of narrativism exists in real life. In the autobiography¹⁰⁴ of a former Stalinist named Magnus Utvik, the author describes his descent into deep totalitarianism... Asserting that a major step was when he started lying in his propaganda for the cause. He had arrived at the point where the truth was simply whatever fitted his Great Story of the one true and righteous form of communism.

The process is usually far subtler, and does not have to be tied to a Great Story or Great Authority. The stories of everyday people in their everyday lives easily go down such roads as well. Narrativization is very vulnerable to narrative fallacies: Flawed stories about the past shaping our understanding of the present, selected through our bias in favor of what makes a simple and compelling story.¹⁰⁵ In extreme cases, we regard the narrative as being evidence in itself. *Narrempiry*, if you will. Even if we stick to facts that exist independently of the narrative, we can still pick and choose between these available facts, and also between available starting points. Picking which ones to pay attention to, as well as how we pay attention to them, based not on what will give the most accurate overview but instead on what will best fit the story we have already selected. A selection based on our personal desires and

¹⁰² Satirically referenced in Order of the Stick #937. Book not yet published as of January 2014, web version available at: <http://www.giantitp.com/comics/oots0937.html>

¹⁰³ Orwell (1983), page 225.

¹⁰⁴ Utvik (2012)

¹⁰⁵ Taleb (2007)

preferences, or on what is or isn't socially appropriate in our social group... a group of peers, family, employers, clients or whatever, as the case may be. In “Precarious Life, Judith Butler argues¹⁰⁶ that in contemporary American culture, the socially appropriate starting point for narratives about terrorism is 9/11. Everything that happened after that day must be seen in the context of that day, never in the context of anything that happened before 9/11 – especially 9/11 itself must be seen as something that happened without a political context, thus giving USA a permanent monopoly on the role of innocent victim in all permitted narratives: To question the narrativism of this narrative framework is conceptualized as siding with the terrorists. In “Social life as Drama”, Ervin Goffman argues¹⁰⁷ that people are generally playing roles in their social lives. To unquestioningly embrace one's role and refuse to see the roleplaying is rewarded with being regarded as a honest person, while a person who questions the narrative gets punished through being dismissed as a cynic.

To depend on one's social group, emotionally or otherwise, may make it harder to resist the temptation of falling into narrativism in favor of whatever narratives happens to be popular within the discourse and cateity of this particular group. Even when failing to do so wouldn't jeopardize their employment or social standing, people still look to each other for truth. Not merely knowledge of truth, but truth itself: Social Proof, as defined by Cialdini, means that the attitudes of the social group does define (rather than merely indicate) what is correct and what is not¹⁰⁸. It stands to reason that when a narrative is important to people's cateity – specifically their sense of identity and categorization as belonging to a certain social group – they are inclined to cling on to the social reality of this narrative even when it has proven to be incompatible with what happens in physical reality. When a story doesn't fit the facts, it must either be reinterpreted (for example into a metaphor) or escape into a narrativism where the misfitting facts can simply be denied. Shortly after his discussion on social proof, Cialdini tells about a religious cult of people who were patiently waiting for the end of the world¹⁰⁹. This group was not interested in recruiting new converts, not until the prophesies proved untrue and the world didn't end after all. Then half the group left, and the remaining half started to spread the Good News about how the world had not ended after all... not only for the explicit purpose of gaining new recruits, but also for the implicit purpose of convincing themselves and each other that their message is The Truth, no matter the evidence.

¹⁰⁶ Butler (2011), page 22-28.

¹⁰⁷ Goffman (1997), page 95-107.

¹⁰⁸ Cialdini (2001), page 99-104.

¹⁰⁹ Cialdini (2001), page 104-111.

A particularly hostile form of narrativization which often falls into narrativism is “threat narratives”. This can be defined as any narrative where a certain category of people is constructed as a threat. For example “the Latino threat narrative” as portrayed by Leo Chavez, where illegal immigrants to the USA are constructed not only as criminals but also as soldiers in a “reconquista” invasion of southwest USA.¹¹⁰ In the more specific definition of Alison Tieman, a threat narrative is to downplay one side's agency and hostile intentions and up-playing its vulnerability, while downplaying the other side's vulnerability and up-playing agency and hostile intentions. This can be done on an individual level or at any level of group dynamics and social structure¹¹¹. Threat narrative are compelling, because they make it easy to build our story around one of the most popular themes in culture: Good versus Evil. When we think of great destructiveness and harm, we may be inclined to think of “Evil, with a capital E”. In her book *The Banality of Evil*¹¹², Hannah Arendt gives a very different vision of a great horror of our time. The holocaust itself, being administrated by gray little men who were simply doing their job.

In supposed contradiction to Arendt, Psychologists Haslam and Reicher argues¹¹³ that holocaust administrators such as Eichmann did not merely submit to Hitler, blindly following his orders, but rather identifying with him and showing pride as well as creativity in carrying out the dreadful orders. However, these visions need not be inconsistent with each other. How big is the difference, really, between doing as you are told and believing as you are told? Submission to a tyrant is not merely a matter of submitting to demands for physical action. It is a matter of submitting to the dichotomies, categorizations and narratives used by the regime. The administrators of the holocaust did not merely kill Jews because they were told to do it. They believed in the ideology because they were told to believe in it. A belief in a categorization of Jews as “*untermench*” and in a Great Story of how the Nazi Party would save the Aryan Race from The Global Jewish Conspiracy. The line between acting and believing becomes further blurred by psychosocial phenomena such as “the bystander effect”¹¹⁴, which is that nobody in a crowd will speak up or take action because nobody else does. A situation where people act in a certain way because it seems to be the socially appropriate thing to do, and believe it to

¹¹⁰ Chavez (2008), page 22.

¹¹¹ Tieman (2013)

¹¹² Arendt (2006)

¹¹³ Haslam & Reicher (2012)

¹¹⁴ Brehm, Kassin & Fein (2002), page 360.

be socially appropriate because people are acting that way. People may be shallow in their agreement, or even secretly disagree, but still openly embrace whatever the consensus seem to be.

Something being true in the internal reality of your own mind or in the limited social reality of a certain story does not make it true in social reality at large or in physical reality. Genocide for the sake of blind submission to a told story is just as banal as genocide for the sake of blind submission to a given order. Gary Alen Fine argues¹¹⁵ that Hitler's bad reputation is not only a social construction, because the holocaust really did happen. One might say that while the holocaust is a matter of narratives in social realities, it is also a matter of how people were killed in physical reality. These deaths should not be trivialized... which is true not only regarding six or so million Jews, but also regarding the other six or so million victims of Nazi Germany's "final solution": Homosexuals, Romani, people with mental disabilities, and other categories of people targeted by the nazi bigotry. One of the key differences between dicanaism (short for "Dichotomism, CAtegorism and NArrativism") and reasonable dicana (short for "DIscourse, CAteity and NArrativization") is that narrativism typically denies or trivializes all facts and points of view that do not fit the chosen narrative. Narrativism is not a matter of what stories you relate to, but a matter of how you relate to them. To make the distinction between physical reality and social realities, as well as the distinction between narrativization and narrativism, removes the need for the misguided argument that something can be more or less socially constructed. Everything that exist in social reality is 100% socially constructed, but those constructions (constructions such as discourses, cateities and narratives) can be more or less in harmony with each other and with what's going on in physical reality. It is undeniable that the human beings who died in the holocaust did live. It is undeniable that they did have living brains with internal realities of their own, minds that would have existed for much longer had they not been murdered. Each victim had at least one name and at least one personal identity. Our perspectives on these facts are socially constructed, whatever those perspectives may be, but the facts themselves are not.

¹¹⁵ Fine (2002), page 227-236

7.2. Conceptualizing Categorism: Two examples regarding the concept of Muslims

Prejudice, bigotry and discrimination against Muslims is one of the many foci of categorism where dichotomism, monolithization and narrativism plays a huge part. People thinking in false dichotomies between “west” and “Muslim”. People talking about over a billion human beings, the Muslims of the world, as if they were one monolithic block. A block to speak for or against, a canvas for one's assorted narratives. Continuing from previous chapters, culture and belief should be seen as something that people *have* rather than something that they *are* in such a sense that they can be reduced to it. As something each individual owns, rather than is owned by. To what extent the cateity of being a Muslim is a matter of identity, belief, membership in a social group, or all of the above, must be up to each individual Muslim to decide.

How, then, should we conceptualize categorism against Muslims? If categorism is prejudice, bigotry, discrimination and so on, based on a categorization of human beings, then antisemitism is reasonably categorism that targets Jews, while homophobia is categorism that targets homosexuals. Categorism that targets Muslims can be called either antimuslimism or islamophobia. Both words are in use, with the word islamophobia currently being far more widespread than the word antimuslimism¹¹⁶. However, the word islamophobia is very controversial. For example, the “Manifesto of 12”¹¹⁷, signed by the Iranian author Salman Rushdie and the Islamic intellectual Irshad Manji among ten others gives the following warning:

After having overcome fascism, Nazism, and Stalinism, the world now faces a new global totalitarian threat: Islamism. We -- writers, journalists and public intellectuals -- call for resistance to religious totalitarianism. Instead, we call for the promotion of freedom, equal opportunity and secular values worldwide. [...]

To counter [totalitarianism], we must assure universal rights to oppressed people. For that reason, we reject “cultural relativism”, which consists of accepting that Muslim men and women should be deprived of their right

¹¹⁶ Googling both words at 17:th December 2013 gave “About 1,010,000 results” for “islamophobia” and “About 3,360 results” for “antimuslimism”.

¹¹⁷ Manji (2011), page 144-145.

to equality and freedom in the name of their cultural traditions.

We refuse to renounce our critical spirit out of fear of being accused of “Islamophobia”, an unfortunate concept that confuses criticism of Islamic practices with the stigmatization of Muslims themselves.

What then, is the concept of islamophobia? The twelve signers make a distinction between “criticism of Islamic practices” and “stigmatization of Muslims themselves”. If a concept of “islamophobia” is used without making such a distinction – meaning sometimes one, sometimes the other, and sometimes both as if they were the same thing – this does indeed become a very problematic equivocation.

If the concepts of “racism” and “homophobia” are about protecting the human rights and dignities of human beings who happens to be of a certain ethnicity or sexual orientation, is the concept of “islamophobia” the same thing for human beings who happens to be of a certain religion? Or is it instead about protecting an abstract concept of “True Islam” and a monolithic “The Muslim” from the independent thought of actual human beings in general and actual Muslims in particular? Is it a matter of protecting the humans in a group, or a matter of protecting a definition of the group itself? A group defined by who, on what terms? Does it provide equal freedom and protection to Muslims who are female and/or homosexual, or does it favor the zero-category of heterosexual men¹¹⁸? Does it protect children who did not choose their religion, or does it favor an idea of children being the property of their parents? In order to emphasize that it is a matter of protecting humans (in this case humans who are categorized as Muslims) rather than a matter of protecting any concept or orthodoxy of a certain belief, ideology or religion (in this case the religion of Islam), the word antimuslimism may be preferable.

A cateity can be about many different things for many different people. To belong to a religion such as Islam and Christianity doesn't necessarily have to be a matter of philosophy and spirituality. For some it may be primarily that, but for others it may primarily be a matter of who in your village will be regarded as a friend or enemy, ally or competitor. In their study *After The Communal War*¹¹⁹, researchers Patrick Barron, Muhammad Najib Azca and Tri Susdinarjanti describe the aftermath of a

¹¹⁸ Benson & Stangroom (2009) argues that the scriptures and traditions of the Abrahamic religions (Christianity, Judaism and Islam) contain much that is deeply misogynistic.

¹¹⁹ Barron, Azca & Susdinarjanti (2012).

civil war on two Indonesian islands. The civil war was held between two groups, Christians and Muslims, each with their own infrastructure for politics, social security and distribution of resources. Afterward, the struggle for rebuilding and reconciliation was handled very differently on the two islands. On the island Maluku, the rebuilding and reconciliation was focused on balance between Muslims and Christians, thus prolonging the conflict by indirectly creating a zero sum game where every gain for one group was a loss for the other and vice versa. On the Island of North Maluku, the efforts were more focused on society as a whole, which proved to be far more successful.

The book puts much focus on “elites”, a concept that include official and unofficial leaders on all levels. Violence happens because elites allow or encourage small things to escalate, and they are often the ones who get the violence started in the first place. However, the authors warn against viewing the regular people as passive victims of manipulation. On the contrary, elites are often under pressure from the grassroots. While the book doesn’t go much into the issue of how a person becomes elite or stops being elite, it is evident that a person can become elite by playing on religious intolerance to incite violence. A person stops being elite by no longer being influential, by no longer being mover and shaker in the local community.

The study “After The Communal War” is about social justice, not natural science. Yet, it gives a very clear example of what Dawkins was talking about: It shows how categories do not exist at all in physical reality and not unproblematically in social reality, and how their prominence in our minds and discourses can obscure reality and make us fail to understand more complex truths. In this case, how concepts of religious affiliation hide social dynamics more accurately conceptualized as being about elites and clients. Concepts are tools, stories are perspectives. A nuanced understanding requires a wide range of relevant tools and wide range of relevant perspectives. Discourse is central to peace-building, since some discourses are more useful for purposes building and benefiting from peace, while others are more useful for purposes of prolonging and benefiting from conflict.

7.3. Discursive Alliances and the Overton Window

The struggles portrayed in “The Manifesto of 12” and the struggles portrayed in “After the Communal War” take place on two very different kinds of levels. Practical levels, with struggles over practical solutions to practical problems. And on the other hand discursive and narrative levels, with struggles over the meanings and connotations of concepts as well as what kind of story is being told. Is it a story about different cultures and religions clashing with each other... or is it a story about elites and would-be elites using such divisions and concepts to gain and maintain power over others?

The manifesto as well as “After the Communal War”, portrays two groups who are very different from each other, and in many ways have opposing goals, yet share a common discourse that justifies oppression and violence. In “After the Communal War”, these two groups are “Christian elites” and “Muslim elites”. Together, they build a discourse and political practice where Muslims and Christians stand against each other. A system that give power to these very elites, on both sides. In “The Manifesto of 12”, the two groups are instead totalitarian Islamists and a certain brand of cultural relativists - which would perhaps be more accurately defined as “cultural racists” to distinguish them from more reasonable relativists. These two sides are criticized for sharing a common discourse that deny humans who happens to be Muslims their rights and dignity as individual human beings, branding them instead as property of a totalitarian Islamist self-proclaimed elite. What is being described here is not cases of a formal alliance in the traditional sense, but an alliance non the less. An alliance of discourse.

Alliances can be said to exist on three levels. On each level, both sides work together for their mutual benefit. The highest of these three levels is the formal alliance, where representatives for each side meet to enter into an agreement which they promise to uphold. The middle level is the informal cooperation, where the involved parties simply act in a beneficial way without necessarily having even met – much less entered into any formal deal. The low level is the *discursive alliance*, where the parties are united not in a shared practical goal but rather in a mutual discourse. On this level we also find other forms of discursive alliances: The *category alliance* of two groups each finding their own identity and sense of group self by defining themselves against each other, or the *narrative alliance* of sharing a story – even if it is the story of a conflict where the two groups are the two opposing sides.

In a shared discourse, the participants validate each other by agreeing on what they are talking about. In

a shared narrative, the participants validate each other by agreeing on what kind of story they are participating in. In both cases, they help each other achieve “interpretation privilege”: the power over interpretation, a concept that in Swedish is called “*tolkningsföreträde*”. They may be on opposite sides of the struggle, but they still agree with each other on what the struggle is about. Thus cementing the discourse and narrative being used.¹²⁰ By doing so, they help each other against other competitors and enemies. They form a *de facto* discursive alliance about meanings and connotations of certain words, and a *de facto* narrative alliance about what the ongoing struggles are really about. Such alliances may be inherently invisible to a participant who see their discourse and narrative as “simply the way things are” rather than as “one of several ways to talk about and look at things”. Those who do see the narrative or discursive alliance with a social or political enemy are likely to think of it not as an alliance, but rather as a matter of respecting the enemy and “realizing” that he is more important than those who don't share the discourse and narrative.

Two different positions may be allied over some concepts and narratives, while not on others. This becomes especially insidious considering the phenomenon known as the Overton Window¹²¹: On a sliding scale, the end points are likely to be regarded as “extreme”, while a shifting area in the middle will be regarded as reasonable. Much of the struggles that are going on – on the surface, as well as on discursive and narrative levels – are about trying to move such Overton Windows - so that one's own position will be inside it and regarded as reasonable while the other side is not included in the Overton Window and thus gets regarded as extremist. This encourages at least two problematic kinds of discursive and narrative alliances. One is to form them with influential groups, in order to defend one's own position within the Overton Window. Embracing and reproducing popular discourses and narratives in order to *appear* relevant and reasonable, even when it comes at the cost of the *actual* relevance and reason. The other is to form them with extremists who claim to represent a concept and/or a category of people, as a way of discrediting that entire concept or category - and thus pushing it out of the Overton Window.

To promote destructive discourses and narratives through discursive alliances and narrative alliances is not necessarily done on purpose, not even as a necessary evil. On the contrary it often happens as

¹²⁰ See also Malik (2011)

¹²¹ Russel (2009)

accidents¹²², rather than purposeful acts, often remaining unnoticed. The struggles over the Overton window in general and the intersection with discursive alliances in particular may be one of the biggest problems with the struggles against categorism and all other dicanaism. Pretty much everyone can honestly say that they are against prejudice, bigotry, black-and-white thinking, and so forth... although with the unspoken limitation that they are only against it when it is done by people they disagree with in the first place. Focusing exclusively on the irrationality and hostility of arguments based on anger, while paying no heed to the often very rational reasons for being angry in the first place. Shutting down ideas that are new (at least to the person expressing them) and thus unrefined, rather than encouraging them to develop into something more nuanced. Or not even focusing on what is being said, but rather on what categories of people should be allowed to talk (or at least be listened to) in the first place. Games of positioning and posturing, instead of honest attempts to achieve understanding and insight.

7.4. Summary

This chapter puts the concept of categorism in a context of the concepts of dichotomism and narrativism. Together, the three concepts are called dicanaism. They are the dark side of discourse, cateity and narrativization - three concepts that together are called dicana. Dichotomism is to be stuck in black and white thinking, to see the world in rigid concepts and categories rather than sliding scales. Narrativism is to put a story (in the widest sense of the word) above all other concerns, disregarding perspectives and facts that do not fit the narrative. The concepts of dichotomism and narrativism are in turn central *abstractions of categorism*, a concept we will explore in the next chapter.

¹²² The application of system theory as conceptualizing suicide as being a matter of accidents (Beskow, Palm Beskow and Ehnvall 2013, pages 27 and 109-119) may be applied to discourse as well.

8. Categorism: An expanded overview

“By categorizing people, we give them meaning and make them comprehensible – while assigning them a place in a social hierarchy.”

- Paulina de los Reyes & Lena Martinsson¹²³

Having looked into the problems with categorization and how oppression is not about the oppressed, it is now time to move on to the concept of categorism. As a basic concept in itself, categorism is prejudice, bigotry, discrimination and so on, based on a categorization of people. As a conceptual framework, categorism contains many different concepts divided into the three aspects of facets, foci and abstractions. The facets are how the categorism is done. This part of the model is based on Young's model “The Five Faces of Oppression”. The foci are categorism based on specific categorizations: The traditional concepts of racism, sexism, homophobia and so on. The abstractions are categorization itself being problematic. This part of the model is based on social constructionism and on the the critique of essentialism voiced by Dawkins, Leff and others.

One could also say that the three aspects of categorism puts emphasis on different aspects of the second article of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Facets are about “*Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration*”. In other words, facets of categorism are actions (discursive or otherwise) that threaten the rights or dignity of human beings. Abstractions are about “*without distinction of any kind*”. In other words, categorization of human beings is a phenomena that can be problematic no matter how the particular distinction is made. Foci are about “*such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status*”. In other words, foci are specific categorizations and categories of human beings being targeted for categorism.

The phenomena here called “categorism” and “the three aspects of categorism” are universal in the sense that they exist in all societies and have surely existed in all societies throughout history. While

¹²³ De los Reyes & Martinsson (2005) – translated from Swedish.

the phenomena has existed for thousands of years, the concepts for these phenomena (as well as the terms for these concepts) are much younger and much less established. Concepts for individual facets (such as stigmatization), foci (such as racism and sexism) and abstractions (such as the “No True Scotsman” fallacy) has been widespread for centuries. Meanwhile, concepts for viewing foci, facets or abstractions as unified phenomena rather than as isolated incidents are still in the process of getting integrated into mainstream language.

The facets of categorism are how the categorism is done. This builds on the groundwork made by Young, and includes the five concepts defined by her as the five faces of oppression. Facets are concepts such as prejudice, bigotry and discrimination. As well as concepts such as marginalization and “othering”, the later being the discursive act of constructing an “us versus them” dichotomy where people are constructed as being “the other” - which is closely related to denying them their own voices.¹²⁴ With categorization of people being a matter of social construction, the abstractions of categorism are how categorization of people can in itself be an aspect of categorism. Meanwhile, the foci of categorism are what particular categorizations of human beings the categorism is based on, and what categories are being targeted. Here we find the original concepts, such as racism, sexism and homophobia.

In this theoretical framework, concepts categorized as “facets” and concepts categorized as “foci” are quite different kinds of concepts. Facet concepts are specific phenomena in human interaction: Acts that people do, ways of treating or perceiving people. While foci concepts, on the other hand, are based entirely on categorization of human beings: It revolves around the issue of what category of people is being targeted, what categorization of people the targeting is based on. Concepts categorized as “abstractions” are a more complex matter. While facets and foci do not overlap each other, abstractions overlap them both. On their own, facets and foci rest on a dichotomy between on the one hand what is being done (to a category of people) and on the other hand what category of people (this something is being done to). To introduce abstractions is to realize that the very act of dividing people into categories is in fact something that is being done to people. For better and for worse, sometimes terribly much worse.

¹²⁴ Spivak (2002), page 94.

The concepts in the “foci” category may overlap with each other in two ways. The first kind of overlap is between the two kinds of foci: The categorization level (for example racism, being based on categorization by race or related concept) and the targeting level (for example afrophobia, targeting people of African ancestry specifically). Foci on the targeting level always overlap with the related focus on the categorization level, while not overlapping with each other. The other kind of overlap happens when categorization is not clear-cut. For example, antisemitic propaganda may see Jews as a religious group, as a race, or both at the same time. The concepts in the “facets” category overlap with each other in a more fluid manner, as the same act can be several facets of categorism at once. For example, to use “gay” as a curse-word is in itself a categorist slur. Depending on context, using this slur may also be an act of othering, stigmatization, demonization and/or marginalization against gay people.

When talking about categorism, it is important to do so without indulging in dichotomism. It is important to acknowledge that dichotomism, categorism and narrativism are actions, not essences. They are done to different extents and in different ways, not something that “either is or isn't”. Categorism and other dicanaism is normally something that people *do*, not something that they *are*. Pretty much everybody has reason to struggle a bit with themselves over these problems sometimes, without deserving to be labeled as *being* “categorist”, “racist”, “dichotomist”, or any other such negative descriptor. Such titles should be reserved for extreme cases. There may always be reason to debate where the line should be drawn: The struggle over the “overton window” may be never-ending, but caution and moderation is advised. The concept of categorism, or any of the concepts included in the conceptual framework of categorism, must not be misused as an excuse to justify violations of human rights, or to silence criticism against such violations¹²⁵. It is also important to try to see the problems in their contexts, on all relevant levels. It is rarely enough to point out destructive patterns of discourse, cateity and narrativization, without also finding out *why* people think in those ways. To label the dicanaism is only a starting point. To let it be an answer in itself is to indulge in othering and incomprehensibilization. In many cases, a starting point will have to be enough. Time and energy is limited, not enough to analyze everything at length. But we must still acknowledge that it is merely a starting point.

¹²⁵ Being Jewish herself, Butler (2011, page 114) has argued this particular point regarding the concept of antisemitism.

Categorism is something that people *do* to each other, and sometimes to themselves. It is when categorization of human beings crosses the line from being a tool for understanding and for offering positive identities that are voluntary to internalize, into instead becoming a psychosocial prison or a dirty weapon. The phenomenon of doing categorism against oneself is here called “Internalized Categorism”. It is more widely known as “self-stigmatization” when it's about stigmatization (one of the facets of categorism) or “internalized homophobia” when it's about homophobia (one of the foci of categorism). Self-categorization and categorization made by others do not always match. Social pressure may prohibit people from accepting themselves the way they are, moving to lock them out of a certain identity. But it may also assign them an identity that is alien to them, and move to lock them into this identity. Categorization of people and categorization of behavior sometimes overlap, and a behavior may indeed be unacceptable. But those who would argue that a certain behavior ought to be unacceptable has the burden of proof, and it is not valid evidence to construct an “us versus them” narrative.

8.1. Prejudice, Bigotry and Discrimination: The archetype facets of categorism

The facets of categorism are the many different ways in which categorism is done. But how does one know what is a valid facet, and what is not? The answer is that while there are many specific facets, only three are archetype facets. These are Prejudice, Bigotry and Discrimination. For something to be a valid specific facet of categorism, it needs to be an expression of at least one of these three archetype facets.

The dictionary definitions¹²⁶ of these concepts are as follows:

Prejudice	Bigotry	Discrimination
<p>2. a (1) : preconceived judgment or opinion (2) : an adverse opinion or leaning formed without just grounds or before sufficient knowledge</p> <p>b : an instance of such judgment or opinion</p> <p>c : an irrational attitude of hostility directed against an individual, a group, a race, or their supposed characteristics</p>	<p>1: the state of mind of a bigot</p> <p>2: acts or beliefs characteristic of a bigot</p> <p>Bigot</p> <p>a : a person who strongly and unfairly dislikes other people, ideas, etc. : a bigoted person; <i>especially</i> : a person who hates or refuses to accept the members of a particular group (such as a racial or religious group)</p> <p>b: a person who is obstinately or intolerantly devoted to his or her own opinions and prejudices; <i>especially</i> : one who regards or treats the members of a group (as a racial or ethnic group) with hatred and intolerance</p>	<p>3. a : the act, practice, or an instance of discriminating categorically rather than individually</p> <p>b : prejudiced or prejudicial outlook, action, or treatment</p> <p><racial discrimination></p>

To these definitions we can add a simpler set of definitions: Prejudice is categoristic beliefs, Bigotry is categoristic feelings, and Discrimination is categoristic acts. Note that these definitions do not *replace*

¹²⁶ Merriam Webster (2004).

the traditional dictionary definitions, as this would give the concept of categorism a circular definition. Instead, the dictionary definitions remains as well – and are used in defining categorism as “prejudice, bigotry and discrimination, based on a categorization of human beings”.

Other concepts are valid specific facets of categorism when they are expressions of prejudice, bigotry and/or discrimination. This principle can be used both to evaluate the individual concept itself and to evaluate the individual case. For example, the phenomena of “stigmatization” is often a matter of prejudice, bigotry or discrimination. Or all three of them at once. Yet, some cases of stigmatization are not cases of these archetype facets, and thus not cases of categorism. For example, to stigmatize a person for having murdered a fellow human being may be a case of justified disdain rather than a case of bigotry. As well as a case of reasonably negative special treatment rather than a case of discrimination.

Within reason, we should always keep an open mind and an open heart while treating each other well. To dismiss an idea, to despise a person or to treat someone in a hurtful manner may be justified, but the burden of proof is always on those who claim that it is so. The stronger the claim, the stronger the need for evidence. There should always be room for a reasonable level of preconceptions, acceptance of negative feelings and a freedom of choice. The Philosopher Gadamer famously argued¹²⁷ in favor of “Prejudice”: Embracing it as something good and necessary, arguing that the danger is not in prejudice itself - but rather in believing oneself to be objective and free from prejudice. However, Gadamer is using a very wide definition of prejudice, going back to the word's root “pre-judgement”. In other words, he use it as synonymous with the more neutral word “preconceptions”. In the conceptual framework of categorism, like in so many other contexts, the word prejudice is given a more limited meaning: Limiting it to destructive prejudices and to a mind-narrowing clinging to one's preconceptions. As a part of categorism, prejudice is when preconceptions stop being a tool for preliminary understanding, and instead becomes a cage or a dirty weapon. On this level, the concept of “stereotypes” does not need to be differentiated from the concept of “preconceptions”. Using a reasonable level of stereotypes can be included in the concept of having reasonable preconceptions, while being locked in stereotypes or using stereotypes in a harmful manner can be included in the concept of prejudice.

¹²⁷ Gadamer (2004)

When conceptualizing a focus of categorism, it is important that the definition:

- A). Is about a category of people, rather than an abstract concept in itself.
- B). Is about this category of people being subjected to facets of categorism.
- C). Is not constructed to blame, or shield from blame, a certain category of people.

To fight against categorism must be about protecting the rights and dignity of all human beings. Not about shielding an ideology, belief, power-structure or venue of financial profit from criticism and competition. Freedom of speech and expression is about humans having a right to freely access ideas, not about ideas having a right to freely access humans. To *visibilize* categorism is about pointing out prejudice, bigotry and discrimination. Not about protecting such destructive attitudes and abusive behaviors under the guise of the perpetrators being a targeted group. Note the 30:th article of the UDHR: The human rights do not include any right to violate the human rights of other human beings. It is also important that all struggles against categorism, abuse and oppression is conducted in fair and constructive ways, not through facets of categorism. Hatred against real or imagined bigotry and social sanctions against real or imagined discrimination is not automatically bigotry and discrimination in itself – but it may become that, if it is off-target or implemented in an unbalanced way.

An example: Lets say that someone would argue that murder should be legalized because the social practice of convicting murderers is “murderophobia”: discrimination against murderers as a category of people. This claim should be dismissed, on the ground that murder violates the human rights of the victim - and that certain social sanctions against people who fit into the category of “murderer” are therefore justified. However, lets say that society becomes saturated in myths about murderers. People start viewing “murderers” through facets of categorism rather than through reasonable disdain for crimes against fellow human beings. Thus being overly draconic towards actual murderers, and also including persons who actually never murdered anyone in the category of “murderer”: An abstraction of categorism, such as refusing to make a distinction between “actually murdering actual persons in real life” and “murdering fictional persons in computer games”. In this case, we would have an actual focus of categorism, although one that must be conceptualized in a way that does not excuse murder. A term such as “murdererparanoia” would be vastly preferable over a word such as “murderophobia”. While this word may not be needed in contemporary society, words like “pedoparanoia” and “witchparanoia” may well be. These neologisms are included below to describe two foci of categorism.

8.2. Levels and depth of facets

Facets of categorism can operate on different levels. Ranging from personal micro scale to the global macro scales, as well as ranging from being a matter of how people speak about something to being a matter of structural patterns for how people behave. Failing to distinguish between such different levels, one is likely to proverbially “compare apples and oranges”. Thus making it easier to invisibilize or incomprehensibilize various expressions of categorism. One distinction that can be made is into the following six categories: Individual, group, systemic, structural, discursive and dogmatic.

“*Individual*” level refers to the internal reality of what happens within a person. And also to how this is expressed by the individual.

“*Group*” level refer to how people interact with each other. Social dynamics on a micro level. Such group-dynamics may for better and worse include building social norms for what views, feelings and acts are socially appropriate, encouraged or even mandatory in the group, and which ones are not. These norms may or may not differ significantly from mainstream society.

“*Systemic*” level refers to something happening over and over in a pattern that is sufficiently coherent to have effects of its own. Patterns of prejudices, bigotries and discriminatory practices that are common in a culture, subculture or similar. Lots of little things that wouldn't matter if they were isolated incidents but that adds up very quickly.

“*Structural*” refers to a facet of categorism being built-in into a social structure of some kind. Discriminatory laws, customs, self-reinforcing social expectations, and so on.

“*Discursive*” level refers to a facet of categorism having been built into how we talk and think about concepts. How the language turns into dichotomism that bends our thoughts, feelings and acts in certain directions, limiting our understanding and locking people in linguistic cages.

“*Dogmatic*” level refers to a facet of categorism that has been systematized in such a way that it has been built into a cateity or great narrative. Which may be conceptualized as a political ideology, a theological position, a scientific paradigm, or simply “the common sense”. Narrativization can turn into

narrativism, and thus narratives can turn into destructive dogmatism that fuels categorism.

These six levels are constantly interacting with each other, affecting each other in various ways. For example, a person who holds an certain prejudice or bigotry on an individual level may feel more at home in a social context where this particular categorism is also systemic and structural. He may also feel more at ease with discourses and narratives that reinforces his categorism rather than opposes it.

Even when two cases of the same facet of categorism operate at the same level they may still differ greatly in how deeply entrenched they are in the mindset of the person or social conventions of the group. It may also vary with power relationships: The same categorism may be more damaging when done by the many against the few, or by the powerful against the comparatively powerless.

8.3. Specific facets of categorism

There are many different facets of categorism. Below follows ten examples of such facets. An extended list of 30 examples can be found as “Appendix C: Facets of Categorism”. While trying to be as inclusive as possible, this list is still limited to 30 briefly described examples so that it will be possible to get an overview. Many of the listed facets are described in greater depth throughout the previous chapters, as well as in the Appendix E: Glossary. They will also be available at www.Categorism.com

For something to be a facet of categorism, it must be an expression of at least one of the three archetypical facets Prejudice (categoristic beliefs), Bigotry (categoristic feelings) and Discrimination (categoristic acts). This is listed as the facets “type(s)”. The list also include what level(s) the facet operates on: Individual, Group, Systemic, Structural, Discursive and/or Dogmatic. Finally, facets are likely to intersect each other. Some examples of Likely Intersections (LI) are listed for each facet.

For example, lets say that a man named Adam deeply dislike people he consider to be “homosexual”. Adam has (A) a lot to say about how filthy and disgusting he consider “that kind of people” to be, and (B) about how sexuality is “meant” for procreation. He's always (C) talking about gay people as “them”, always taking for granted that the people he talks with are heterosexual – the “us” that isn't “them”. He assume that everyone is heterosexual, unless they do sexual activities in public with people of the same gender – and he has a very negative view of anyone who would have sex in public. Of

Adam's coworkers, Beatrice has a girlfriend and consider herself a lesbian. But she (D) doesn't dare to out herself or otherwise stand up to Adam, and is thus assumed to be heterosexual. Meanwhile, Adam often (E) accuse another coworker named Cedric of being “gay” or “a faggot”, refusing to hang out with him and thus making it impossible for Cedric to join social activities with any group of coworkers that contain Adam or any of his friends. This is in spite of Cedric only being attracted to women, and (F) often pointing this out.

This example is an example of several facets of categorism:

A: Stigmatization and unchecked aversion, on a personal level: Adam expressing his personal bigoted emotions.

B: Invisibilization, incomprehensibilization and stigmatization, on a dogmatic level: Adam taking part in construction a worldview where there's no room for gay people (or for anyone else who have relationships for love or pleasure), where it shouldn't be possible to understand gay people, and where there must be something deeply wrong with gay people.

C: Othering. On a personal level from Adam, on a group level from the coworkers who let it happen, and also on a systemic level if they live in a society where this is common and commonly accepted. Also reduction and representation bias, as Adam reduce gay people to sexual acts and assume almost everyone to be heterosexual – gays who don't misbehave doesn't count as “gay” to him.

D: Invisibilization on a structural level: Beatrice live in a social context where people are assumed to be heterosexual. In such a society, a gay person often have to decide between outing herself (and possibly face dire consequences if she does) or be conscripted into assumed heterosexuality. While straight people generally don't have to face that dilemma.

E: Demonization, categorist slurs, othering and marginalization, on a personal level: Adam doing this to Cedric.

F: Othering, on a group level: To defend himself against Adam's attacks, Cedric enters a discursive alliance with Adam. Cedric construct himself as belonging to the group, being “one of us”, by helping Adam to construct gay people as being “the other, not us”.

Thus, this simple situation contains at least ten identifiable facets of categorism: Stigmatization, unchecked aversion, invisibilization, incomprehensibilization, othering, demonization, categorist slurs marginalization.

8.4. Foci of categorism

Prejudice, bigotry and discrimination is typically based on a categorization of people. Within this categorization, a specific category is often targeted. These are the foci of categorism: Categorization foci such as racism (race), sexism (gender) and sexuality (paraphobia, as well as targeting foci such as afrophobia (africans), misogyny (women) and homophobia (homosexuals & bisexuals). While many foci exist, some are more deeply rooted than others. Historically, antisemitism is arguably the most classic focus of them all¹²⁸.

“But what will happen even if we do burn down the Jews' synagogues and forbid them publicly to praise God, to pray, to teach, to utter God's name? They will still keep doing it in secret. If we know that they are doing this in secret, it is the same as if they were doing it publicly. for our knowledge of their secret doings and our toleration of them implies that they are not secret after all and thus our conscience is encumbered with it before God.”

Martin Luther, *“The Jews And Their Lies”*¹²⁹

Another classic focus of categorism is “racism”, a word from which words such as “sexism” has been derived.¹³⁰ The word “racism” entered the English language in 1936 as part of the discourse against National Socialism and the German Third Reich, replacing older words such as racialism.¹³¹ One of the works central to establishing the word was the book “Racism”¹³² by Magnus Hirschfeld, a pioneer in sexology research and minority rights advocacy. The book was published posthumously in a foreign country since Hirschfeld, being a German citizen, died 1935 in exile from nazi persecution.

These foci are only some among many. An extended list of 30 examples can be found as “Appendix D: Foci of Categorism”. While trying to be as inclusive as possible, this list is still limited to 30 briefly described examples so that it will be possible to get an overview. The categorism model allows for a more nuanced understanding of concepts such as racism, allowing different definitions to coexist by simply distinguishing the from each other. For example, racism can exist on many levels. Only the

¹²⁸ Michael (2006).

¹²⁹ Luther (1948) – English translation. Luther wrote the original text, “Von den Juden und ihren Lügen”, in 1543.

¹³⁰ Barnhart (1988), page 879.

¹³¹ Harper (2014)

¹³² Hirschfeld (1938)

dogmatic level requires an ideology or the equivalent thereof, and only the structural level requires one to identify social structures. Note that structures are plural: The world has not only one big context with one big structure, but many different contexts with many different structures. Note that just like the suffix of “-ism” shouldn't limit concepts such as racism to only refer to coherent ideological stances, suffixes such as “-phobia” or “-paranoia” shouldn't be used as an excuse to invisibilize the structural level. All foci of categorism exist on all levels of facets (here called “individual, group, systemic, structural, discursive and dogmatic”), no matter what syllable a particular word ends in.

8.5. Abstractions

While facets are how the categorism is done and foci are what categorization it is done by, abstractions are problems with the categorization itself: Ways in which categorization can be used to create or sustain categorism. While categorization as such is necessary, each particular categorization made by human beings is a more or less arbitrary social construct. That which is categorized in a certain way can always be categorized in another way instead. Such choices are made for better and worse. When categorization creates or supports categorism, it becomes abstractions of categorism. Below follows ten examples of such abstractions.

Abstraction	Meaning
1. Co-definitions, used as Guilt By Association or Association By Guilt.	Two concepts that don't fit all that well together are defined as being the same thing. One of the concepts is a category of people. The other is an action that is considered bad, or a category of people defined as those people who do that bad thing. For example, a preacher who want to paint gay people in a bad light may fight for a discourse where unprotected sex with strangers is included in the very definition of homosexuality. Either that, or simply use a concept of “sexual deviation” where homosexuality, pedophilia and self-destructive forms of promiscuity are defined as being inherently the same concept.
2. Distinctions, used as Guilt By Disassociation or as denial of rights:	Two concepts, one of them being a category of people and the other something completely different, are defined as being incompatible. For example defining being a “Muslim” as being a priori incapable of wanting democracy and human rights.
3. Equivocation	Why settle for one set of bad definitions, when you can use several at once? Any position can be glued together by using overlapping and conflicting definitions of the same concept at the same time.

4. Incomprehensibilization of the categorization	Making the categorization hard to comprehend. The lines of who is or isn't included and on what basis people are included or not may be fuzzy, mystic, self-referring, or simply undefined. Either way, it may be taboo to discuss – complete with a whiff of conspiratorialism: “If you question the concept of this category of people, it's probably because you are secretly one of them”.
5. Categorization by Narrativism	If “truth” is whatever makes a good story, we only need to know that the bad guys are the bad guys. Definitions and categorizations are secondary, and does not need to be comprehensible. To even try to analyze them would be to ruin the good story. Which may be something that only one of the bad guys would do, anyway.
6. Dichotomism	The idea that a person is either one category or another, as if the categories were the real thing and the humans only examples of them, rather than the humans being what's real and the categories being crude attempts to get an overview.
7. Zero-category	A lack of intersectionality goes well together with making the normative category invisible. It thus becomes easy to talk about “women” as a concept that actually refers only to white heterosexual women, “people of color” or “muslims” as a concept that actually refers only to heterosexual men of that wider category, and so on.
8. Loosely defined Abyss-category.	Having defined a certain category to be The Evil, anything that feels bad can be squeezed into that concept. For example, the word “fascism” often refers to any political position the user of the word happens to dislike. This usage of the word is unfortunate not only because it's often unfair, but also because it makes it harder to criticize actual fascism ¹³³ .
9. Categorization by emotional bias	People you dislike are exempt from categories with positive connotations while people you like are exempt from categories with negative connotations ¹³⁴ , and vice versa.
10. Termism and the “No true Scotsman” fallacy	The idea that stereotypes are always true, because people who don't fit the stereotype doesn't count: If they were truly part of the category, the stereotype would fit ¹³⁵ .

¹³³ Arnstad (2013)

¹³⁴ For example, Wennstam (2012) argues that the people refuses to see people they like as being rapists, even if they do in fact commit rape.

¹³⁵ Flew (1975)

8.6. Summary

This chapter presents categorism as a unifying concept for prejudiced beliefs, bigoted feelings and discriminating acts based on a categorization of people. It also expands categorism into a conceptual framework, unifying facets (such as marginalization, othering and demonization), foci (such as racism, sexism and homophobia) and abstractions (such as equivocations, guilt by association and the “no true scotsman” fallacy). Also taking into consideration different levels on which categorism can be done: Personal, group, systemic, structural, discursive or dogmatic.

This system has room for a dynamic continuous development, where new facets, foci and abstractions being added over time, while existing ones can be redefined to make room for more nuance and better accuracy - or even removed, if one turns out to be based on a misconception or similar.

9. Conclusion & Further Research

The concept of categorism has here been established as a conceptual framework with room for many different facets, foci and abstractions, operating on different levels. Facets of what the categorism is – starting with the archetype facets of prejudice, bigotry and discrimination, moving on to more specific facets such as othering, marginalization and stigmatization. Foci of what categorizations are being used for the categorism and what categories are being targeted by the categorism. Abstractions of how the categorization itself can be problematic. Levels, ranging from the micro scale of interactions between individuals to the macro scale of socioeconomic structures.

Three questions remains.

1. Does this model resolve the threefold problem of categorization of human beings versus the universality of human rights?
2. How should this model relate to the concept of oppression?
3. How should we proceed with further research?

9.1 Resolving the threefold problem

The introduction chapter identifies a threefold problem of categorization of human beings versus the universality of human rights. These three sides of the problem are Non-inclusiveness, inviting discursive struggles, and reinforcing monolithization.

* The problem of non-inclusiveness is solved by being inclusive: Unlike models based on specific categorizations, the categorism model can be used regardless of what categorization is being used as platform for prejudice, bigotry or discrimination. Thus fortifying the stance that human rights are universal in the sense that they are for all humans, not merely for specific categories of humans or for humans being categorized along specific lines.

* The problem of inviting discursive struggles is solved by building a nuanced and coherent understanding of what categorism is, providing tools for analyzing when and how categorism is being done. Bringing together many preexisting concepts and terms, and conceptualizing several new terms to add to this analytical toolbox. This entire conceptual framework can be applied to any focus of

categorism, pushing back discourses that goes against universal human rights.

* The problem of reinforcing monolithization is solved by analyzing categorization rather than categories, thus being able to analyze oppression done to categories of people without further oppressing people within the category by locking them into any vision of what this category – or membership in it – means. By using this method, we can use categories in a human rights discourse with much less risk of getting stuck in those categories.

Thus it solves all three aspects of the problem, and therefore the threefold problem itself. The concept and conceptual framework of categorism is thus likely to be useful for building an inclusive human rights discourse that analyze problems of categorization and related problems such as inequality and oppression. Especially doing so without contributing to the problem by basing our analysis on the very divisions we are trying to oppose.

9.2 Conceptualizing oppression

With the concept of categorism defined as a lot of different facets and abstractions done to a lot of different foci, what then of the concept of oppression? Categorism has been conceptualized as existing on many different levels. Specifically, the concept of facets of categorism has been conceptualized as having six levels: Individual, group, systemic, structural, discursive and dogmatic. Would this mean that oppression is categorism on the structural level? Not always. While much oppression is structural, a dictionary definition¹³⁶ of oppression is “unjust or cruel exercise of authority or power”. This is something that can be done on any level. Structural, local group or individual. While a definition limited to a structural level may be useful in some contexts, the word itself is more flexible with other relevant meanings that should not be ignored. Ultimately, oppression is about power, and power is something that exist between people. Exist on all levels of social interaction. The discourse about racism, homophobia or any other focus of categorism should not be restricted to the individual level, to the socioeconomic and/or cultural structural level, or any other one level. Instead, it need to be able to handle all of the levels. Separately, as well as in interaction with each other.

To conceptualize the concept of oppression in a meaningful and precise yet fairly simple way becomes

¹³⁶ Merriam Webster (2004)

simpler by having the concept of categorism. A reasonable definition of “oppression” could be: “Oppression is categorism in a severely unequal balance of power. A balance where a person, group or social structure doing categorism has a strong power advantage over the human beings who this categorism is being done to.”

This definition is not limited to any one level of socioeconomic scale (which would also make it limited to any one socioeconomic context) and not dependent on dividing people into dichotomies: Compatible with analyzing power relations through dividing people into dichotomies of “privileged” and “oppressed”, or other analytical models that rely on categorization of people into different groups. But also open for analyzing oppression as something that can be done within a group. Or as something that can be done between different levels of scale - such as a group oppressing the individuals within the group, or an individual oppressing a group without targeting specific individuals or acting as a representative of a category.

The notion that oppression within a group is being done by elites against the common members is sometimes accurate and relevant, at least to some extent. While it should therefore be used in such cases, it should also be used with care and moderation – not letting it be yet another excuse to divide people into a dichotomy of the good group versus the bad group. While such dichotomies are a wonderful narrative tool to make people in the in-group feel good about themselves, they are also deeply problematic. Especially when the dichotomy come in forms such as the innocent victims who lacks agency versus the nefarious designated scapegoats. Such a categorization is categorist against both the groups, as it is *infantilization* against of one of them while being demonization against the other.

If the idea of a group oppressing all the individuals within the same group seem strange, consider philosophical thought experiments such as “the prisoner's dilemma”. In this experiment, the context is set up so that everybody loses when they go along with the premise presented to them: Two persons are given the choice between either helping or harming another person, and the context is set up in such a way that there is always more to gain from harming the other person no matter how that other person acts. Yet, both persons have more to lose from being harmed by each other than they have to gain from harming each other. One could say that they are both stuck in an oppressive social structure, a structure

that is oppressive precisely because it encourages the involved individuals to harm each other as they perpetuate the structure. In the same way, each individual in a social group may have more to gain than to lose from perpetuating whatever prejudices, bigotries and discriminations happens to be normative within that particular social group. Yet, everyone in the group may ultimately lose from this practice - as they lose more from being harmed than they gain from contributing to the harmful patterns.

9.3 Further research

The process of building this thesis has created new questions for each question that has been answered. New questions, follow-up questions, or both. Examples of further research to do in the future includes:

1. Further study of various facets and foci of categorism, through studying a wide ranges of theoretical viewpoints, field studies and lived experiences. This process of testing and expanding the model includes academical research as well as input from a wide range of fields of activism for human rights and social justice. Through intersectional perspectives, this applies not only to the facets and foci of categorism, but to some extent the abstractions as well.
2. Further study of discourse, categorization and fallacies: Exploring dichotomism, narrativism and the abstractions of categorism through a wide interdisciplinarity range of research.
3. Further study of discourse, cateity and narrativization. In the long term perhaps including development of cateity analysis as an analytical methodology, built on discourse analysis and narrative analysis as well as psycho-social homeostasis and self-categorization theory.
4. One particular starting point that I'm personally considering is to study the briefly mentioned Indonesian birth certificate issues, as issues of categorization and citizenship: Issues of categorism, narrativism and oppression.

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Appendix A: 3x3 Reality Checklist

The thesis “Categorization of human beings versus the universality of human rights” uses a distinction between three different layers of reality. It uses a distinction between three layers of conceptualization – how we understand our realities through concepts. And it also uses three basic assumptions about the universe.

These three sets of three can be used as a simple “reality checklist”. Once understood, it is easy to overview, and can thus be used to quickly identify and avoid many sources of misunderstandings and faulty assumptions.

1. Three layers of reality		
1.1. Physical Reality	1.2. Internal Realities	1.3. Social Realities
Intertwined with each other, yet distinct from each other and operating on very different premises. The physical reality we all share, the internal reality or realities within each human brain and mind, and the social realities spun between these minds. Whether something is “real” or “true” or not depends greatly on what layer of reality one is talking about.		
2. Three levels of conceptualization		
2.1. Phenomenon	2.2. Concept	2.3. Word, or other Term
As we have concepts for phenomena and words for concepts, the languages we use to understand our realities are always two steps removed from the phenomena we describe. This increases the risk of equivocations and other confusion. Not only when we talk to each other, but also when we think about things. (A term is a word, or string of several words, used to describe a certain concept.)		
3. Three basic assumptions about the universe		
3.1. The universe exists.	3.2. The universe is not inherently deceptive.	3.3. The universe does not revolve around any particular person or group.
These three assumptions may seem rather obvious, but the point is that they should never be casually assumed to be untrue. Or rather, an argument that doesn't fit with all of them should never be casually accepted: Either dismiss it, or discuss whether the assumption is true or not after all.		
You exist, and the feelings and needs of your internal realities should be respected. Note that the fact that the universe exists and doesn't revolve around you means that the internal realities of everyone else are just as valid as your own. Also, your beliefs are not inherently more valuable than anyone else's, and not less valuable either. Since the universe is not inherently deceptive, we can find and evaluate evidence. Improving our understanding together in a mutual quest for knowledge and insight, rather than blindly submit to authorities and despise each other for not submitting to the same authority.		

Appendix B: Additional Delimitations

There are so many aspects that could be included in a text about Categorization of human beings versus the universality of Human Rights. The “delimitations” subchapter mentions that the thesis does not focus on neuropsychology or on the debate between relativism or universalism, although these issues are briefly mentioned. Meanwhile, there are at least four other issues that could also be mentioned:

1. Children & Animals. The thesis revolves around categorization of human beings without making any in-depth analysis of the category of “human being” itself. Humans are simply assumed to be inherently distinct from animals, sentient in ways that animals are not and thus having rights that simply cannot apply to animals. The right to vote is central to human rights, signifying that rights and responsibilities are intertwined. A newborn human can be expected to grow into a responsible adult who participates in society. A newborn animal cannot. We therefore need to distinguish between adult humans, human children and animals. It is not “discrimination” to deny children and animals the right to vote, a right that would not truly be a right for them – but instead a right to extra votes for those adult humans who in one capacity or another are caretakers or legal guardians of children or animals. While I consider it reasonable to argue that rights for children and animals should not mean having the same rights and responsibilities as adult humans, this thesis is not the place to spend a chapter on making a comprehensive argument for the position. Or to explore the nuances of the sliding scale between childhood and adulthood.

2. The concept of human. To talk about humans, and thus to talk about human rights, holds an inherent equivocation: On the one hand, the word “human” refers to “all sentient beings in the known universe”, but on the other hand it refers to “one specific species, also known as Homo Sapiens Sapiens”. These two definitions are normally not in conflict with each other: The human civilization has not yet encountered any extraterrestrials or created any true artificial intelligences. If we one day encounter extraterrestrials or develop artificial intelligences, should we then consider them to be human and recognize their right to equal human rights? Probably, with the reservation that we would then also need to carefully consider the needs of these other intelligences, given how our culture's comprehension of Human Rights has so far been molded to fit the needs of our specific species, the Homo Sapiens Sapiens.

3. The power of dicanaism. To truly understand dichotomism, categorism and narrativism, we need to understand what function they fill (in individual psyches as well as in social structures). This thesis barely scratch the surface of such issues. To reduce one's thinking to black and white dualism, a simple division in “us and them” and a simple narrative makes it easier to hurt other people. Which makes it easier to violate their human rights, but might also make it easier to prevail in a struggle for survival. To truly overcome dicanaism, we need to not only identify it and distance ourselves from it, but also replace it with better survival mechanisms – as well as building society in such ways that extreme survival mechanisms won't be needed in the first place.

4. Further analyzing the concept of layers of reality. The thesis makes a division into three layers of reality: Physical, Internal and Social. It does not make room for any discussion on to what extent this model should be considered complete or incomplete. There is much to be said on this issue within various branches of metaphysics & philosophy, as well fields of study such as sociology of religion & psychology of religion. An in-depth analysis of the works of Immanuel Kant could be a fruitful starting point for such approach. Ultimately, the distinction between physical, internal and social reality is sufficient for the purposes of this study.

Appendix C: 30 specific facets of Categorism

Due to space limitations, the sub-chapter on specific facets of categorism only contain an example where ten facets of categorism are identified. A somewhat more extensive list of facets can be found here. The number is still limited to 30 examples of facets, as a simple delimitation.

1. Biased Balance (AKA The Golden Mean Fallacy)	Type(s): Prejudice, leads to Discrimination	Level(s): Any.	LI: Narrativism, Dichotomism
	Aiming for balance not between two sides coexisting, but rather between one side's right to exist and the other side's "right" to harass them.		
2. Categorist Slurs	Type(s): Bigotry & Discrimination	Level(s): Any.	LI: Demonization, Narrativism, Othering
	The act of creating or reproducing a equivocation where the same word is used as a "bad word" in general while also used to refer to a category of people.		
3. Category Agency	Type(s): Prejudice & Bigotry	Level(s): Dogmatic misconception of systemic and structural.	LI: Monolithization, Narrativism
	The idea that a category of people itself (such as "The Jews") can have an agenda and take action in the same way as if it was a person or organization.		
4. Collective Guilt	Type(s): Bigotry	Level(s): Dogmatic	LI: Category Agency, Monolithization.
	The idea that individuals are guilty of having done things that they have in fact not done. Not to be confused with the responsibility to avoid reproducing destructive structures that one benefits from but did not create.		
5. Conspirationalism	Type(s): Prejudice & Bigotry	Level(s): Dogmatic or discursive misconception of individual and group.	LI: Narrativism, Category Agency, Othering, Incomprehensibilization
	Constructing a discourse and/or narrative where innocent acts of individuals and groups are seen as if they were part of a conspiracy.		
6. Dehumanization	Type(s): All three	Level(s): Dogmatic or discursive	LI: Othering, Incomprehensibilization
	Constructing a discourse and/or narrative where a certain category of people is seen as less than human.		
7. Demonization	Type(s): All three	Level(s): Dogmatic or discursive	LI: Othering, narrativism
	Constructing a discourse and/or narrative where a certain category of people		

	is seen as Evil.		
8. Denial of Agency	Type(s): Prejudice & Discrimination	Level(s): Systemic or structural	LI: Kyriarchy, invisibilization
	Making people powerless by making it harder for them to act or for their actions to be noticed.		
9. Energy Drain	Type(s): Discrimination	Level(s): Any	LI: Exploitation, Violence, Supremacism
	Demanding time and energy out of people from a certain category by constantly pushing them to defend or explain themselves.		
10. Enforcing Cateity	Type(s): All three	Level(s): Any, but primarily dogmatic	LI: Monolithization, Stigmatization.
	Limiting people's lives by enforcing a cateity, pushing a stereotype or perceived identity upon people.		
11. Exploitation	Type(s): Discrimination, often excused by bigotry	Level(s): Group or structural.	LI: Marginalization, Kyriarchy, Reduction.
	Putting people in an unfair position and using them for one's own benefit.		
12. Hate-crimes	Type(s): Bigotry	Level(s): Starting at individual or dogmatic level, expanding through groups.	LI: Illegal Discrimination, Stigmatization, Zerosumming.
	Hate is one of the most volatile forms of bigotry, with strong potential to lead to violent hate-crimes ¹³⁷ and other forms of persecution once it becomes established as the social norm in a group.		
13. Illegal Discrimination	Type(s): Discrimination	Level(s): any, countered at a structural level.	LI: Hate-crimes, exploitation.
	Any form of discrimination covered by national laws against discrimination.		
14. Incomp-rehensibilization	Type(s): Prejudice	Level(s): Discursive	LI: Narrativism, Othering, Dehumanization
	The discursive act of making a category of people incomprehensible, positioning it as if it wasn't even possible to understand.		
15. Invisibilization	Type(s): Prejudice	Level(s): Discursive or structural	LI: Narrativism, Reduction/Exploitation.
	Creating a discourse where a category of people or the problems they face becomes invisible.		
16. Kyriarchy	Type(s): Discrimination	Levels: Structural	LI: Exploitation, marginalization, Denial of Agency, Narrativism.

¹³⁷ Schafer & Navarro (2003)

	The power of dominant groups, whatever groups that might be, and to the structures that reinforce such power.		
17. Marginalization (AKA Social Exclusion)	Type(s): Discrimination	Level(s): Group or structural.	LI: Stigmatization, Kyriarchy
	To be marginalized is to be locked out. Not able to participate and not able to contribute. Thus also locked out of opportunities to improve one's abilities, gather resources and gaining any authority as an insider.		
18. Monolithization	Type(s): Prejudice, often fueling bigotry and discrimination	Level(s): Discursive or dogmatic.	LI: Dichotomism, Dehumanization, Collective Guilt.
	To see people as if they were not individual persons, but rather specimens of a monolithic category. For example, understanding <i>statistical</i> differences between groups as if they were <i>categorical</i> differences.		
19. Narrativism	Type(s): Prejudice	Level(s): Dogmatic.	LI: Narrempiry, Dichotomism, Category Agency, Collective Guilt
	Harmful use or misuse of narratives or narrativization. A mindset where actual humans are seen as metaphors, plot devices or expendable extras rather than as real people with their own rights and needs.		
20. Narrempiry	Type(s): Prejudice and discrimination	Level(s): Any.	LI: Narrativism, Incomprehensibilization
	A form of narrativism where the story is considered the evidence in its own right: Prejudices about people can be “proven true” by repeating such stories.		
21. Othering (including “racifying”)	Type(s): Prejudice	Level(s): Discursive	LI: Dehumanization, Stigmatization
	Othering is the discursive act of constructing a person or group as being “the other”, as in “not the same as one of us”.		
22. Reduction (includes “singular identity” and “depersonalization” as well as “objectification” – sexual or otherwise)	Type(s): All three	Level(s): discursive or dogmatic	LI: Exploitation, Denial of Agency, Incomprehensibilization
	Reducing a person to a certain function, behavior, or identity, making them an object rather than a subject. Not about having a limited interaction with a person, but about having a discourse or behavior signifying that this limited interaction is all that the other person is. ¹³⁸		
23. Representation Bias	Type(s): Prejudice	Level(s): individual and systemic	LI: Monolithization, Stigmatization
	Mistaking representatives of a certain subset of a category for representing		

¹³⁸ Many stories of customers mistreating the staff of various business in such ways can be found on <http://NotAlwaysRight.com>

	the wider category as a whole.		
24. Scapegoating	Type(s): Prejudice and Bigotry	Level(s): dogmatic, systemic or group.	LI: Collective Guilt, Narrativism
	A category of people being unfairly blamed for certain problems.		
25. Stigmatization	Type(s): Primarily bigotry	Level(s): Any	LI: Conspirationalism, Demonization, Othering.
	People being discredited or looked down upon for belonging to a certain category or seen as behaving in a way associated with that category.		
26. Supremacism	Type(s): Bigotry	Level(s): Any	LI: Narrativism, Unchecked Aversion, Marginalization, Stigmatization.
	Assuming a position of superiority. Either in the form of a soft supremacism fueled by condescending compassion, or in the form of a hard supremacism fueled by straightforward hate and openly constructing the other as inferior.		
27. Unchecked Aversion	Type(s): Bigotry, leading to prejudice and discrimination.	Level(s): Individual, can be reinforced on group or systemic.	LI: Supremacism, Othering
	Allowing an irrational aversion to affect ones understanding or treatment of a category of people.		
28. Violence	Type(s): Discrimination	Level(s): Any	LI: Dehumanization, Othering, Hate-crimes, Marginalization
	Includes not only literal violence itself, but also the justifications for violence and the ever-present fear of violence among potential victims.		
29. Voice Appropriation	Type(s): Prejudice & Discrimination	Level(s): Structural or group.	LI: Kyriarchy, Monolithization.
	Denying human beings the right to have a voice of their own by assigning a voice to represent them without their consent.		
30. Zerosumming	Type(s): Prejudice	Level(s): Discursive or dogmatic.	LI: Dichotomism, Narrativism, Narrempiry
	The false assumption that everything is a zero-sum game. That harming one group or person inherently benefits another group or person, and vice versa.		

Appendix D: 30 specific foci of Categorism

Due to space limitations, the sub-chapter on specific foci of categorism only contain a few classic examples. A somewhat more extensive list of facets can be found here. The number is still limited to 30 examples of facets, as a simple delimitation.

Of these 30 examples, 10 are on the categorization level while the remaining 20 are on the targeting level. Note that in many cases, a targeting focus can fit into more than one categorization focus. For example, should antisemitism (categorism against Jews) be categorized as a form of racism (categorism based on ethnicity) or a form of religism (categorism based on religion or other faith/belief)? The answer is “both”: Jewishness is socially constructed both as a religion and as an ethnicity. In the interest of not listing the same focus twice, antisemitism has been listed only as one of them, but it could just as well be listed as the other. Note that many of the concepts on the list have multiple definitions. Often one definition referring to any categorism against the targeted category, and another definition being limited to a certain facet (such as bigotry) or level (such as structural).

Name of a categorism focus based on...		The word refers to categorism against people, based on the following categorization or targeting the following category:
Categorization	Target category	
1. Racism		Based on race, skin-color or ethnicity.
2.	Antiromanism	Targeting people who are self-identified Romani, or are seen as Romani/Gypsies by others. Also known as Antiziganism, although this version of the word is more problematic ¹³⁹ .
3.	Orientalism	Targeting “Orientals”: People living in countries categorized as “eastern”, such as Egypt and Japan, defining these very different populations as being one unified category. ¹⁴⁰
4.	Occidentalism	Targeting “Occidentals”: People who live in cities, people who are secular and highly educated, as well as people who are born in western countries, defining these three categories as being one unified category. ¹⁴¹
5.	Gingerism	Targeting people with red hair. ¹⁴²
6.	Afrophobia	Targeting Afro-Americans, Afro-Europeans and other people of African ancestry living in other parts of the world. ¹⁴³

¹³⁹ Based on the word “romani” being preferable over “zigenare” or “gypsies”, the Swedish office of integration argues (Integrationsverket 2007, page 128) that the word “antiromanism” should be used rather than “antiziganism”.

¹⁴⁰ Said (1978)

¹⁴¹ Buruma & Margalit (2005)

¹⁴² Rohrer (2007)

7. Sexism		Based on gender. Targeting women to a larger extent than targeting men, as our culture has traditionally regarded women as being “the second sex” ¹⁴⁴ .
8.	Misogyny	Targeting women ¹⁴⁵ .
9.	Misandry	Targeting men ¹⁴⁶ .
10.	Transphobia	Targeting trans people, or anyone who is not a cis-person.
11. Paraphobia		Targeting sexual minorities ¹⁴⁷ , such as fetishists and sadomasochists.
12.	Homophobia	Targeting people for being perceived as homosexual, including self-identified homosexuals and bisexuals ¹⁴⁸ .
13.	Pedoparanoia	Targeting innocent people through frivolously accusing them of being pedophiles, child-molesters or some kind of unspecified-yet-serious danger to children.
14. Religism		Based on religion, faith or other belief ¹⁴⁹ .
15.	Antisemitism	Targeting people who are self-identified Jews or are seen as Jewish by others.
16.	Antimuslimism	Targeting people who are self-identified Muslims, or are seen as Muslims by others. Also known as Islamophobia, although this version of the word is more problematic ¹⁵⁰ .
17.	Christianophobia	Targeting people who are self-identified Christians, or are seen as Christians by others ¹⁵¹ .
18.	Atheophobia	Targeting people who are self-identified Atheists, or are seen as Atheists by others ¹⁵² .
19.	Witchparanoia	Targeting people by accusing them of being evil witches with

¹⁴³ Beshir, Hübinette & Kawesa (2014)

¹⁴⁴ De Beauvoir (1952).

¹⁴⁵ While the dictionary definition (Merriam Webster 2004) is limited to “a hatred of women”, the term is here used to include not only bigotry but also prejudice and discrimination.

¹⁴⁶ While the dictionary definition (Merriam Webster 2004) is limited to “a hatred of men”, the term is here used to include not only bigotry but also prejudice and discrimination.

¹⁴⁷ Cronström Beskow. (2005)

¹⁴⁸ Coined in the sixties by George Weinberg (Weinberg 2012), with a definition focused on bigotry. The meaning of the word has expanded since then. The dictionary definition (Merriam Webster 2004) refers to discrimination as well as to facets of bigotry.

¹⁴⁹ Writer & Baptiste (2009) conceptualizes “racism or ethnocentrism” as being the first of “the seven oppressions”. The other six, being presented as being the same thing as racism although based on other identities/categorizations than race/ethnicity, are: Linguicism, classism, sexism, heterosexism, ableism, and religism.

¹⁵⁰ Professor Halliday argues (Aldridge 2000, page 138) that the term antimuslimism is preferable over the term islamophobia, since the prejudice, bigotry and discrimination is against Muslims rather than against Islamic tenets of faith.

¹⁵¹ The book “Christianophobia” (Shortt 2012) describes the violence, persecution and discrimination against many Christians in countries such as Egypt and Indonesia.

¹⁵² The word atheophobia was originally derived from the word homophobia, to signify prejudice, bigotry and discrimination against atheists (Rattford 1987).

		dangerous and destructive supernatural powers. Although this may target anyone, including self-identified ¹⁵³ witches, the most common targets seem to be African children. ¹⁵⁴
20. Ableism		Based on functionality, usually targeting people who have a specific disability.
21. Ageism		Based on age ¹⁵⁵ , often in the form of needlessly and arbitrarily judging people to be “to young” or “too old”.
22. Classism		Based on direct or indirect perception of social class. Direct such as condemning people for their real or perceived social class. “Class” refers to socioeconomic position, social status, or both.
23. Heightism		Targeting people who are longer or shorter than those doing the categorism consider normal. ¹⁵⁶
24. Linguicism		Targeting people who speak a certain language or people who have limited or no skill in a certain language.
25. Intersectional Foci		Intersectional Focus is when the focus is not on a single categorization, but on the combination of two or more categorizations.
26.	Racist Sexism	Targeting a combination of race & gender, for example Asian Men or Caucasian women. Racist sexism against black women is sometimes called misogynoir, a word derived from “misogyny” and “noir” ¹⁵⁷ .
27.	Whore-Stigma or Slut-Shaming.	A combination of sexism and paraphobia, targeting women with accusations of being sex-workers or other supposed sexual transgressions ¹⁵⁸ .
28.	Transmisogyny	Targeting trans-women with mixed misogyny and misandry.
29.	Paraphobic Misandry/Misogyny	Categorism against based on sexuality and gender, Constructing sexuality in men/women as perverted and dirty.
30.	Heterosexism & cis-sexism	Sexist and homophobic/transphobic notions of what a “real man” or “real woman is”.

¹⁵³ People who self-identify as witches may for example be members of the Wicca religion (Adler 1979).

¹⁵⁴ Molina (2006), page 6.

¹⁵⁵ Butler (1969): “Age-ism: Another form of bigotry”.

¹⁵⁶ (Nakamura 2005); “Looking up: A short woman's view of a heightist society”.

¹⁵⁷ Jezebel (2013)

¹⁵⁸ Östergren (2006), page 203-204.

Appendix E: Glossary

A list of new or relatively unusual terms that are used in “Categorization of Human Beings versus The Universality of Human Rights”. The list includes how the terms are used in this context. Each description ends with a parenthesis that explains what the term is called in Swedish.

Ableism Categorism focused on a categorization of people by physical and/or neuropsychiatric functionality. (In Swedish: *ableism*)

Abstractions (of Categorism) An abstraction of categorism is a way in which categorization itself can become a part of categorism. Various forms of guilt by association, association by guilt, guilt by disassociation, and so forth. Not only is a category being targeted, the category itself may be complete nonsense bullshit – yet devastating to anyone constructed as belonging to that category. (In Swedish: *abstraktioner*)

Abyss-category A category that is constructed as being the ultimate out-group, the category that an entire society defines itself against. (In Swedish: *avgrundskategori*)

Afrophobia Categorism focused on targeting Africans and people who have African ancestors. (In Swedish: *afrofobi*)

Ageism Categorism focused on a categorization of people by age. Note that having different expectations on children and adults is not necessarily prejudice and that treating children and adults differently is not necessarily discrimination. (In Swedish: *ålderism*)

Antimuslimism Categorism focused on targeting Muslims. See also: Islamophobia. (In Swedish: *antimuslimism*)

Antisemitism Categorism focused on targeting Jews. (In Swedish: *antisemitism*)

Antiromanism Categorism focused on targeting Romani. Also known as antiziganism. (In Swedish: *antiromanism*)

Aspects (of Categorism) Categorism has three aspects: The facets, the foci and the abstractions. For details, see the entries for “facets (of Categorism)”, foci (of Categorism)” and “abstractions (of Categorism)”. (In Swedish: *Aspekter*.)

Atheophobia Categorism focused on targeting Atheists. (In Swedish: *ateofobi*)

A priori Arguments that are true by definition, so that they can be proven by reason alone without any involvement of reality. The opposite of “a posteriori”, which is arguments that are considered true because of the evidence for them being true. An example of an a priori claim that most people can (and in the opinion of this author, should) agree with is that the universe exists, rather than being a dream or illusion. An a priori argument that a vast majority of humanity disagree with is the specific claim that “X is always right, therefore any evidence against X is inherently false”, with X being any one particular person, organization, religious scripture, political doctrine or similar. Generally speaking, it s advisable to keep one's a priori beliefs as simple and basic as possible. (In Swedish: *a priori*)

Biased Balance A facet of categorism: Aiming for balance not between two sides coexisting, but rather between one side's right to exist and the other side's “right” to harass them. For example: Not standing up for the right for gay people to have their relationships in peace as well as the right for religious people to worship in peace, but instead standing up for a balance between the right for gay people to have their relationships in peace versus the “right” for religious people to persecute gay people. (In Swedish: *balansbias*)

Bigotry Categorism done through feelings. This is one of the three facet archetypes of categorism. Therefore, a key element in the definition of categorism is that this definition of bigotry is compatible with the standard dictionary definition of bigot(ry): “a person who strongly and unfairly dislikes other people, ideas, etc. : a bigoted person; *especially* : a person who hates or refuses to accept the members of a particular group (such as a racial or religious group) ”. (In Swedish: *bigotteri* – Note that this word usually has a more narrow definition in Swedish, being limited to bigotry done by people who are religious. When used as synonymous

with “bigotry” as such, it may be prudent to point out that this wider definition is being used.)

Cateitization The act of assigning cateity to yourself and/or other people – deciding who and what these people are, and what that means. It can lean towards categorism, or even outright become categorism, if done in a way that expresses or encourages facets of categorism.
(In Swedish: *kateitetisering*)

Cateitization Alliance Two persons or groups defining themselves against each other, helping each other to build identity by reinforcing the attitude of “We are us who are not them, and they are them who are not us”. Se also: “Discursive alliance” and “narrative alliance”.
(In Swedish: *kateitetiseringsallians*)

Cateity The intersection of categorization and identity: Conceptualizing the self through conceptualizing others and the world, conceptualizing others and the world through the self. A cateity can be a categorization of people, an identity, a system for making sense of the world, or any mix of the above. Any religion or belief, ideology or policy, paradigm or theory can be used as a cateity. (In Swedish: *kateitet*)

Categorism Prejudiced beliefs, bigoted feelings and discriminatory behaviors that are based on a categorization of people. Includes facets such as othering, marginalization and demonization, as well as foci such as racism, sexism and homophobia. And also abstractions, where the categorization itself is a significant part of the problem. (In Swedish: *kategorism*)

Categorist Slurs A facet of categorism: The act of creating or reproducing an equivocation where the same word is used as a “bad word” in general while also used to refer to a category of people. For example, someone who is looking for a generic insult to spit at someone may use the word “gay” (thus building a discourse built on homophobia) or “retarded” (thus building a discourse built on ableism).

Category Agency A form of conspiracy theories where a category of people (for example “the Jews” or “the Muslims”) itself can have an agenda and take action in the same way as if it was a

person or organization. Understanding history not as a matter of structures and discourses and organized groups such as nations, but instead viewing it as if categories were persons struggling against each other. (In Swedish: *kategoriagens*)

Christianism Christianism is politically totalitarian ways of adhering to Christianity, just like islamism is politically totalitarian ways of adhering to Islam. (In Swedish: *kristianism*)

Christianophobia Categorism focused on targeting Christians. (In Swedish: *kristnafobi*)

Cis person A person who's gender identity, biological gender, genetic gender, gender expressions and how the person is perceived by everyone else are all of the unambiguously same gender. There is a sliding scale between cis person and trans person. (In Swedish: *cisperson*)

Classism Categorism focused on a categorization of people by socioeconomic class. (In Swedish: *klassism*)

Co-definition A category or other concept is given a definition that is so wide that it includes things that don't really fit together at all. A classic co-definition concept is “the orient” with “oriental” as the corresponding category of people: This concept assumes that being Egyptian and being Japanese is pretty much the same thing. (In Swedish: *samdefinition*)

Collective Guilt The idea that individuals are guilty of having done things that they have in fact not done, sometimes including things that happened before they were born. Not to be confused with the responsibility to change, and to avoid reproducing, destructive structures that one benefits from but did not create. (In Swedish: *kollektiv skuld*)

Comprehensibilization To make something easier, or at all possible, to comprehend. The opposite of incomprehensibilization. Comprehensibilization can be a matter of explaining something in simpler terms and with better examples. It can also be a matter of creating new models and concepts that are easier to learn and thus in the long term easier to comprehend. In many cases, the process of inventing/discovering an idea and refining it may be the easy part, far easier than

making it comprehensible to a reasonably wide audience. This is and remains an ongoing struggle for greater understanding. (In Swedish: *begripligörande*)

Conceptualization To create an understanding of a concept, forming an image of it in one's mind, defining it. (In Swedish: *konceptualisering*)

Conspirationalism Constructing a discourse and/or narrative where innocent acts of individuals and groups are seen as if they were part of a conspiracy. For example, portraying the fact that some people of a certain category (such as gays, Jews or Muslims) are friends with each other while also having jobs as if they are infiltrating society and holding secret meetings, aka private dinners. Conspirationalism works well together with how stigmatization and violence pushes people underground, forcing them to keep their identities secret: For a secret to get exposed, it must first become a secret¹⁵⁹. (In Swedish: *konspirationalism*)

Critical realism The stance that while our senses doesn't mirror physical reality, they do reference it: The basis for our sensations is a coherent and dependently consistent reality.
In Swedish: *kritisk realism*)

Dehumanization Constructing a discourse and/or narrative where a certain category of people is seen as less than human. (In Swedish: *dehumanisering*)

Demonization Constructing a discourse and/or narrative where a certain category of people is seen as Evil. (In Swedish: *demonisering*)

Denial of Agency Making people powerless by making it harder for them to act or for their actions to be noticed. Includes leaving people without representation, or forcing them to be represented by individuals or organizations that they didn't chose at all or were coerced to chose.
(In Swedish: *agensförnekelse*)

Dicana The combination of DIscourse, CAteity and Narrativization, together forming a triad of

¹⁵⁹ Foucault (1990, page 17-35) argues that this mechanism was the core of Victorian moralism. That the act of making sexuality secret was about making this secret possible to expose rather than about keeping it secret.

how people think and talk, how they relate to themselves and each other, and how they contextualize it all into patterns of meaning. Note that the concept of discourse is flexible: A wide conceptualization of discourse may include cateity and narrativization, and may thus be synonymous with dicana. As all three aspects of dicana are done through each other, the acts of creating cateitization and narrativization are discursive acts even in the more limited definition of discourse. (In Swedish: *dikana*)

Dicanaism The combination of DIchotomism, CAtegorism and NArrativism, together forming a dark triad of destructive patterns of thought. (In Swedish: *dikanaism*)

Dichotomism To be stuck in black and white thinking where everything is either-or rather than sliding scales, and where concepts are tyrants of the mind. Mental cages, rather than tools for understanding. Dichotomism includes the use of “false dichotomies”, but also include over-reliance on dichotomies that are not in themselves false. Can be used as a facet or abstraction of categorism. (In Swedish: *dikotomism*)

Discourse How we talk, and therefore think, about things. Happening between people as well as within people, shaping concepts, definitions, connotations, meanings et etera - and thus our basis for understanding, social struggles, and so on. The definition of the word discourse is traditionally very flexible. See also: Dicana. (In Swedish: *diskurs*)

Discursive Alliance People agreeing on a key element of discourse. They may disagree with each other on everything else, being enemies in an antagonistic discursive alliance. Yet helping each other to gain relevance and interpretation privilege through the discursive alliance while marginalizing other discourses. See also: Narrative alliance and cateitization alliance. (In Swedish: *diskursiv allians*)

Discursive Struggle People arguing over discourse. How we should conceptualize various terms, what connotations and meanings we should use. (In Swedish: *diskursiv kamp*)

Discrimination Categorism done through acts. It is a key element in the definition of categorism

is that this definition of is compatible with the standard dictionary definition of discrimination: “a : the act, practice, or an instance of discriminating categorically rather than individually. b : prejudiced or prejudicial outlook, action, or treatment ” (In Swedish: *diskriminering*)

Energy Drain Demanding time and energy out of people from a certain category by constantly pushing them to defend or explain themselves. When this happens on a structural or systemic level, getting small pushes of the same kind often and from many different directions can add up really quickly. (In Swedish: en form av *energitjuvande*)

Enforcing Cateity Limiting people's lives by enforcing a cateity, pushing a stereotype or perceived identity upon people. Either enforcing your own cateity, such as forbidding a non-Christian same sex couple from getting married because it goes against your own beliefs as a Christian. Or enforcing your own vision of someone else's cateity, such as forbidding a Christian same sex couple from getting married because although you are a non-Christian yourself it still goes against your own beliefs about what it means to be a Christian and thus of what the Christian same sex couple *ought* to want. (In Swedish: *påtvinga kateitet*)

Equivocation Letting a word mean two different things at the same time. In other words, using at least two more or less different concepts as definitions for the same term at the same time. Normally far more subtle than jokes such as “A feather is light. What is light cannot be dark. Therefore, a feather cannot be dark.” Equivocation can also be a matter of having different conceptualizations or connotations of the same concept, which is a step towards eventually splitting them into separate concepts. A equivocation can thus be a step towards a more nuanced understanding, but it can also be a kind of magical thinking or con artistry. A discursive sleight of hand, where different things become the same thing – or a category of people gains certain characteristics - simply by virtue of language having been used in that particular way. Note that equivocation can happen without being used by a person: It can also be a matter of two or more persons talking past each other by each of them using different definitions of the same word in the same conversation. (In Swedish: *ekvivokation* or *dubbeldefinition*)

Facets (of Categorism) A facet of categorism is a way in which categorism is done. With

prejudice, bigotry and discrimination constructed as the archetypical facets (being categorism through beliefs, feelings and acts, respectively), there are also more specific facets. Such as marginalization, demonization, othering, and so on. (In Swedish: *facetter*)

Foci (of Categorism) A focus of categorism is a categorism being based on a certain categorization or targeting a certain category. When categorism is based on categorization by race or ethnicity or such, it is called racism. When categorism is targeting homosexuals and bisexuals, it is called homophobia. (In Swedish: *fokus*)

Gingerism Categorism focused on targeting people who have red hair. (In Swedish: *gingerism*)

Hard Supremacism To openly construct a dichotomy of two categories of people as one being superior people and the other being inferior people. For example, claiming that being of a certain race or gender makes people in that category inherently more moral, more valuable or more capable of ruling society. Compare: Soft Supremacism. (In Swedish: *hård supremacism*)

Heightism Categorism focused on a categorization of people by how tall they are.
(In Swedish: *längdism*)

Heterosexism A combination of homophobia and sexism – including transphobia.
(In Swedish: *heterosexism*)

Homophobia Categorism focused on targeting the category of homosexuals, usually including bisexuals. (In Swedish: *homofobi*)

Illegal Discrimination Any form of discrimination covered by national laws against discrimination. Discrimination that is not covered by such laws is still discrimination in other senses of the word, but not in a legal sense. For example, illegal discrimination against Jews may sometimes happen in contemporary Germany, but would never happen during the third Reich: The Jews were not even considered citizens in the first place, much less protected by laws against discrimination. (In Swedish: *olaglig diskriminering*)

Incomprehensibilization The discursive act of constructing something to be incomprehensible. This something may be a category of people or other concept, or it may be a wider range of discourse such as the argument for a certain position. Such incomprehensibilization has several potential uses. It is hard to argue against a position or argument that isn't comprehensible in the first place. It is harder to defend a category of people against prejudice, bigotry and discrimination when the people in the category has been made incomprehensible. This also makes it easier to get away with an argument that is truly based in prejudice or bigotry (or a behavior that is discrimination). On a more general level, it may be easier to get away with a very bad argument the more shrouded and vague the argument is. If the true point of an argument is not actual logic but to reinforce a certain narrative, obscurity may be preferable. Such reinforcement can come in forms such as polishing one's position with an appearance of being the logical and reasonable position, or in the form of “winning” a debate by making the other side stop responding. Incomprehensibilization can thus be a method of establishing and maintaining authority. From the basic “that's just the way it is” and “if you have to ask, you wouldn't understand anyway” to complex models based on circular reasoning for a premise such as the idea that the people in a certain category are by definition inherently bad. Constructing oneself as the only one who understands, while actively making sure that others will not be able to challenge this position. Incomprehensibilization can also sometimes be a method for avoiding the wrath of authorities, shrouding discourses and arguments for positions that are not socially accepted. Thus, incomprehensibilization is not always a tool of prejudice and bigotry, but can in some contexts instead be a tool to subvert prejudices and bigotries that it in the local social context is mandatory to subscribe to. (In Swedish: *obegripliggörande*)

Infantilization Treating a person or category of people as if they were children, when they in fact are not. While this does NOT apply to treating children as the children they are, it does apply to treating a child (by any definition of the word) as far younger and less mature than they actually are.

Internal Reality The second of the three layers of reality is the more or less unique world or worlds inside each individual person. Primarily studied through psychology and neurology.

Internal realities are built upon the first layer (physical reality), since every human being has a brain to think with - and this brain is composed of matter and energy in the physical world. Note that unlike the two layers of external reality (the physical reality we all share and the social realities built between us), an internal reality is entirely subjective to the individual mind which hosts it. (In Swedish: *Inre verklighet*.)

Internalized Categorism Categorism against oneself. The most famous focus being “internalized homophobia”, such as a gay man believing negative stereotypes about himself and hating himself for it. (In Swedish: *internaliserad kategorism*)

Intersectionality Based on the word “intersection”, the word intersectionality signifies that each human belongs to more than one category and that the intersection between the categories can be more important than the individual categories – that the whole is more than the sum of the parts. Therefore, analysis that depends on one single categorization of people marginalize those who are already marginalized in more than one way. For example, black women will be marginalized not only in an analysis of sexism and gender oppression (which assumes that women are white), but also in an analysis of racism and racial oppression (which assumes that black people are men). (In Swedish: *intersektionalitet*)

Invisibilization The discursive act of making something invisible. Constructing the discourse around it, so that it is not mentioned or seen. When done against a category of people, it can be either a matter of making the people in the category invisible or a matter of misrepresenting those people by invisibilizing a relevant categorization. Thus making the problems these people face either become invisible or wrongfully appear to be their own fault. Often done through silence, suppression techniques¹⁶⁰, or through using abstractions of categorism to hide or define away a real problem. Making people invisible also make them available to be used, denying their needs so that they can exist only to fulfill the needs of other people¹⁶¹. (In Swedish: *onsynliggörande*)

Islamophobia The word islamophobia is sometimes synonymous with antimuslimism, which is

¹⁶⁰ Ås, Berit. "Hersketeknikker". Kjerringråd (Oslo) (1978:3): 17–21.

¹⁶¹ Cronström (2003), page 58-63.

categorism against people who are self-identified as Muslims or assumed by others to be Muslims. However, the word islamophobia is also sometimes given very different meanings, where rights are assigned to a conceptualization of a religion in itself, rather than to the human beings who are categorized as being religious: A matter of protecting a perceived “true Islam” from apostates, heretics, blasphemers and unbelievers, rather than protecting human beings who happens to be categorized as Muslims. (In Swedish: *islamofobi*)

Kyriarchy The Greek word κύριος/*kyrios* means "lord or master". In this context, it refers to the power of dominant groups, whatever groups that might be, and to the structures that reinforce such power. Coined by Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza¹⁶², the term Kyriarchy refers to a social system, or set of connecting social systems, that is built around dichotomous categorization of people, with domination of one group and the oppression & submission of the other. For example men as a group having power over women as a group, or white people as a group having power over people of color as a group. These individual phenomena has been studied by feminist researchers under the name of patriarchy and by post-colonial researchers under the name of colonialism. The concept of Kyriarchy takes an intersectional approach to this phenomena, so that several power dynamics can be explored simultaneously: The same person may belong to the privileged group as well as the oppressed group. Strongly related concepts are “Cultural Imperialism” as used by by Iris Marion Young¹⁶³ and “Symbolic Violence” as used by Pierre Bourdieu¹⁶⁴. Both talk about dominant groups using social reality to ensure their power of disempowered groups. In the categorism model, they are both included in the Kyriarchy facet, being regarded as simply different names for, and perhaps slightly different interpretations of, the same phenomenon. (In Swedish: *kyriarkat*)

Layers of reality Reality can be described as having three different layers of reality: Physical Reality, Internal Reality and Social Reality. These realities can be hard to distinguish because they do not only overlap but are so intertwined with each other that every human being lives in all three of them at all times. Yet they are very different from each other, following very different kinds of laws of nature. And all of them are real. (In Swedish: *Verklighetsnivåer*.)

¹⁶² Schussler Fiorenza (1992)

¹⁶³ In “The Five Faces of Oppression”.

¹⁶⁴ Thompson (1984)

Linguicism Categorism focused on a categorization of people by what language(s) they speak or do not speak. (In Swedish: *linguicism*)

Marginalization To be marginalized is to be locked out. Not able to participate and not able to contribute. Thus also locked out of opportunities to improve one's abilities, gather resources and gaining any authority as an insider. On a socioeconomic level, this can be a matter of excluding people from career and salary opportunities. On a local social level, it may be a matter of shunning a family – for example encouraging one's children to refuse to play with (or even outright harass) the children of gay parents or Muslim parents. (In Swedish: *marginalisering*)

Meso (level) An intermediate (medium) level between micro (small) and macro (large). On a scale where individuals and personal relations are the micro scale and society at large is the macro scale, a specific social context is on the meso scale. (In Swedish: *meso*)

Misandry Categorism focused on targeting men. (In Swedish: *misandri*)

Misogyny Categorism focused on targeting women. (In Swedish: *misogyni*)

Monolithization To see people as if they were not individual persons, but rather specimens of a monolithic category. For example, understanding *statistical* differences between groups as if they were *categorical* differences. As if a certain trait being somewhat more common in one group (compared to some other group) would mean that “the people in that group has that trait”. (In Swedish: *monolitisering*)

Narrative Alliance People agreeing on a mutual narrative. They may agree on it from opposite sides of the story, being enemies in an antagonistic narrative alliance. Yet helping each other to gain relevance and interpretation privilege through the narrative alliance while marginalizing other conceptualizations of what kind of struggle is going on. Often combined with a discursive alliance and/or categorization alliance. (In Swedish: *narrativallians*)

Narrativism Harmful use or misuse of narratives or narrativization. A mindset where real human

beings are treated as plot devices or expendable extras, rather than as real people with their own needs and rights. A mindset where the truth is whatever happens to make a good story and fit into the narrative, while a fact or perspective not fitting into the narrative is treated as evidence of that fact not being true or the perspective not being valid. Can be used as a facet or abstraction of categorism. (In Swedish: *narrativism*)

Narrativism, contained When applied to a work of fiction, or to a roleplaying game between real human beings who all freely participate, *narrativism* is not inherently bad. To disregard facts and perspectives that goes against the narrative may make the story more entertaining. A “willing suspension of disbelief” that is harmless because it doesn't harm actual people. It is acceptable to disregard the human rights of the fictional persons in a movie or other fictional context, to care about their suffering if and only if it fits the story to care about them, because only actual human beings have actual human rights. Note that an actual human being has their own internal realities as well as being reflected in social realities and in the internal realities of those who hear about them, while a fictional person does not have a mind of its own but only the reflections in others. This creates a huge difference between perceiving an actual person as nothing more than a shallow stereotype (which may at best be an oversimplification, that doesn't take the complexity of the actual person into account) and perceiving a fictional person in the same way (which may be the whole truth about this fictional person, since there is no actual person behind the perception and therefore nothing to oversimplify).

Narrativization Building narratives to create meaning. This includes meaning in the sense of “being meaningful” as well as in the sense of “making sense”. The story of your life, your story about the world, and so on. Stories large and small. A religion or political ideology can be perceived as a story about The Struggle Between Good And Evil, while the self-images of individuals can be perceived as their story about themselves. To build narratives is not inherently bad. It doesn't become *narrativism* until it starts to suppress relevant facts or relevant points of views. (In Swedish: *narrativisering*)

Narrempiry *Narrativism* used as empirical evidence: By proving that a certain claim is part of a certain narrative, or at least fits into the narrative, the claim is also considered proven to be

valid objective truth. (In Swedish: *narrempiri*)

Normative (and Normativity) The way something is supposed to be, according to a certain norm – a certain set of social expectations and values. Whether this normativity is a good or bad thing depends on whether the norm is necessary or not. For example, society need to have a norm that people shouldn't murder each other, but doesn't need to have a norm that everyone ought to be right-handed. It is reasonable to stigmatize murderers for being murderers, but not to stigmatize left-handed people for being left-handed. (In Swedish: *normativ, normativitet*)

Occidentalism Categorism focused on targeting “occidentals” - which includes three different categories of people, who in this focus of categorism are conceptualized as being the same category: people who are highly educated, people who live in big cities and people who are from Western countries conceptualized as being one unified category. (In Swedish: *occidentalism*)

Oppression Oppression is categorism in a severely unequal balance of power. A balance where a person, group or social structure doing categorism has a strong power advantage over the human beings who this categorism is being done to. (In Swedish: *förtryck*)

Orientalism Categorism focused on targeting the category of “orientals” - which includes many different categories of people, who in this focus of categorism are conceptualized as being the same category: Japanese, Egyptians, and so on. (In Swedish: *orientalism*)

Othering The discursive act of constructing a person or group as being “the other”, as in “not the same as one of us”. Thus pushing them away, branding them as being something different that do not belong. This act includes constructing people as “being” a race or other category, an act sometimes called making someone “racified”. The relevant part here is not that someone can be said to belong to a certain group, for example a race or ethnicity. The relevant part is that this categorization is used to push the person(s) away, branding them as being something different that do not belong. (In Swedish: *andrefiering, rasifiering*)

Paraphobia Categorism focused on a categorization of sexuality, particularly into a dichotomy of normal versus deviant/paraphilic. (In Swedish: *parafobi*)

Pedoparanoia Categorism focused on targeting people with accusations of being a pedophile, a child-molester, or some kind of unspecified-yet-serious danger to children. Baseless accusations of epidemic Child Sex Abuse has been compared to the “red scare” of the fifties and to the witchhunts of the sixteenthcenturies¹⁶⁵. Note the difference between condemning *actual* child-molesters for their actual crimes, and to assign such criminal status to people who do not do such things. Unlike the supernatural harm attributed to witches (see “witchparanoia” below), the harm of Child Sex Abuse is a very real problem. (In Swedish: *pedoparanoia*)

Physical Reality The first of the three layers of reality. Primarily studied through natural sciences such as physics, chemistry and biology. Note that while physical reality exists independently of the two layers of psychosocial reality (the internal realities inside individual minds, and the social realities built between minds), these layers do not exist independently of physical reality. (In Swedish: *Fysisk verklighet.*)

Prejudice Categorism done through beliefs. It is a key element in the definition of categorism is that this definition of prejudice is compatible with the standard dictionary definition of prejudice: “an adverse opinion or leaning formed without just grounds or before sufficient knowledge”. (In Swedish: *fördomar, fördomsfullhet*)

Queer Not conforming to traditional categorizations and expectations, especially regarding gender and sexuality. To be non-queer is not only to conform to the norm of being categorized as heterosexual and as either male or female - but also to conform to a complex, yet arbitrary and changing-over-time, set of norms for what sexuality means and what it means to be male or female. (In Swedish: *Queer.*)

Racify, racified To racify a person or group is to do racism against that person or group – which includes the discursive act of constructing the racified as being “a race” in the first place.

¹⁶⁵ Guillou (2002)

(In Swedish: *rasifiering, racifierad*)

Racism Categorism focused on a categorization of race, ethnicity, skin-color or similar. Includes targeting foci such as antiziganism and afrophobia. (In Swedish: *rasism*)

Racist Sexism Categorism focused on targeting people by a combination of race and gender. (In Swedish: *rasistisk sexism*)

Religism Categorism focused on a categorization of religion. (In Swedish: *religism*)

Representation Bias Mistaking representatives of a certain subset of a category for representing the wider category as a whole. For example, a psychologist may not meet any mentally healthy individuals from a certain minority – yet believe that his experience of mental patients from that minority is an experience of how people from that minority group are in general. (In Swedish: *representationsbias*)

Sexism Categorism focused on a categorization of gender. Includes targeting foci such as misogyny and transphobia. (In Swedish: *sexism*)

Slut-Shaming Categorism focused on targeting people who are deemed as “dressing provocatively” or otherwise deviate from traditional ideals of chastity. Typically targeting women only, making it a combination of misogyny and paraphobia. Often used as synonymous with whore-stigma, although the connotations can also be a bit different. (In Swedish: *slutshaming*)

Social Constructionism The stance that language and all other aspects of human interaction have been socially constructed and is a continuous process of being socially constructed, and to various extents reproduced or reconstructed, through human thought and interaction. Categories are arbitrary, concepts exists in a historical and cultural context, knowledge is a social process intertwined with social action.

Social Reality The third of the three layers of reality. Primarily studied through social sciences and humanities. Social reality is constructed between human beings, and thus built upon the second layer (internal reality). (In Swedish: *Social verklighet*.)

Soft Supremacism To indirectly construct a dichotomy of two categories of people as one being superior people and the other being inferior people, by constructing it as a matter of compassion or respect. Such as claiming that women shouldn't have to worry about getting involved in politics because men should take care of all such unpleasanties for them. The core of such “condescending compassion”¹⁶⁶ is that it is indeed condescending.
(In Swedish: *mjuk supremacism*)

Stigmatization People being discredited or looked down upon for belonging to a certain category or seen as behaving in a way associated with that category. It is a matter of social norms for how people are supposed to behave and what categories it is considered acceptable to belong to. The same category or behavior that is preferred in one social context may be stigmatized in another.¹⁶⁷ (In Swedish: *stigmatisering*)

Supremacism Assuming a position of superiority. Either in the form of a soft supremacism fueled by condescending compassion, or in the form of a hard supremacism fueled by straightforward hate and openly constructing the other as inferior. The “likely interactions” connections above are for both kinds of supremacism. The Soft Supremacism is also connected to Voice Appropriation, while Hard Supremacism is instead connected to Violence.
(In Swedish: *supremacism*)

Termism Getting stuck in definitions. Getting stuck in magical thinking that a thing is what we call it, or the notion that something is true by definition or “a priori”. Failing to see the distinction between terms/words, concepts/categories and phenomena, mistaking a word for in itself being what that word is trying to describe. Easily goes together with equivocations, as two persons who talk with each other may each be stuck in their own definitions and thus simply

¹⁶⁶ When I once upon a time started a page about [soft supremascism done by characters in fiction] at the wiki site www.tvtropes.org, I initially named this trope “pitying perversion”. It was later renamed into “condescending compassion”, after someone suggested this new title and we all agreed that it was preferable.

¹⁶⁷ Goffman (2007).

talk past for each other. (In Swedish: *Termism.*)

Trans person A person who's gender identity, biological gender, genetic gender, gender expressions and how the person is perceived by everyone else are not all of the same gender. There is a sliding scale between trans-person and cis-person. (In Swedish: *transperson*)

Transmisogyny Categorism focused on targeting trans women. (In Swedish: *transmisogyni*)

Transphobia Categorism focused on targeting trans people. (In Swedish: *transfobi*)

Unchecked Aversion Allowing an irrational aversion to affect ones understanding or treatment of a category of people. For any number of reasons¹⁶⁸, a person may develop an aversion against a concept, and thus against people associated with that concept. Such aversions might need to be kept in check, lest they bloom into outright bigotry... or even a phobia, in the clinical sense¹⁶⁹. (In Swedish: *ohämmad aversion*)

Violence Violence as a facet of categorism includes not only literal violence itself, but also the justifications for violence and the ever-present fear of violence among potential victims. Note that physical violence isn't always against the targeted person's body. It can also be done against the target's children or other family members, pets or possessions. To throw a stone through someone's window is an act of violence in itself, although not as severe as throwing it at an actual person, and also an implied threat of more severe violence. (In Swedish: *våld*)

Visibilization To make something visible. The opposite of invisibilization. Visibilization can be a matter of informing about facts or bringing attention to relevant underlying structures. (In Swedish: *synliggörande*)

¹⁶⁸ For example, the “Little Albert” experiment (Watson & Rayner 1920) shows that is very easy to develop an aversion.

¹⁶⁹ The psychiatrist Cullberg (2003, page 187) conceptualizes “homophobia” as a matter of personality disorder. A phobia against gay people, and an antisocial bigotry against perceived weakness. While this conceptualization is highly problematic for leaving out prejudice and discrimination entirely as well for confining the definition to the individual level, it is indeed reasonable to assume that there are persons who have a phobia in the clinical sense against a category of people - in this case homosexuals. When such a phobia turns into bigotry, it becomes the “unchecked aversion” facet of categorism. There is a huge difference between indulging in such hurtful attitudes and having phobia which the person who suffers from it recognizes as such and don't hold against anyone else.

Voice Appropriation Denying human beings the right to have a voice of their own by assigning a voice to represent them without their consent. This voice may be constructed as being the group itself, as being the expert who understand the members of the group better than people in the group could possibly understand themselves, or simply being the most “genuine” voice by fitting the narrative role for what that voice ought to be. Voice Appropriation can be done from the outside as an attempt to silence the entire group, or by elites within the group who not only speak as members of the group but also pretend that their opinions, values and interests are those of everyone in the group... at least everyone who counts as “true” members of the group. As a part of this dynamic, the group may develop a social norm where everyone who are not members of the dominant group-within-the-group are strongly encouraged to never speak up at all, as their voices would be their own and not truly representing the entire group¹⁷⁰.

Whore-Stigma Categorism focused on targeting people who are sex-workers, perceived as such, or otherwise deviate from traditional ideals of chastity. Sometimes also called “whore-phobia”. Typically targeting women only, making it a combination of misogyny and paraphobia. While mostly interchangeable, the words whore-stigma¹⁷¹ and slut-shaming do have slightly different connotations. The term whore-stigma tend to refer to accusations of being a sex-worker as well as prejudice, bigotry and discrimination against actual sex-workers.¹⁷² The term slut-shaming tend to be more about clothing style and supposed sexuality in general¹⁷³.
(In Swedish: *horstigma* or *horfobi*)

Witchparanoia Categorism focused on targeting people with accusations of being a witch, or of harming people through supernatural means such as magic or demonic powers.
(In Swedish: *häxparanoia*)

Zero-category A normative category that is conceptualized not merely as being normative but as not being a category at all. For example, in a context where it is normative to be white and male, these categories can develop into zero-category by people getting the idea that gender is

¹⁷⁰ In her book *Allah, Liberty and Love*, Irshad Manji (2011, page 46) warns about how this kind of social control is poisonous to the development of discourse within local Muslim subcultures.

¹⁷¹ Agustin (2013)

¹⁷² Östergren (2006), page 203-204.

¹⁷³ At least according to Beusman (2013), who finds this usage of the word unfortunate.

something that only women have and that skin-color is something that only “people of color” have. (In Swedish: *nollkategori*)

Zerosumming Making things into a zero sum game, when they don't have to be. That harming one group inherently benefits another group, and vice versa. Zerosumming can be a matter of setting the rules so that something needlessly becomes a zero sum game. It can also be a discursive act of dichotomism or narrativism, portraying something as if it were a zero sum game when it actually isn't. One way of doing this is the argument that people shouldn't care about a certain issue, because there is some other issue they should care about. As if it wasn't possible to care about both issues. This argument can be used against all and any activism, because there is *always* some other issue that one should also care about. Another way is the argument that it would be inherently “selfish” to be honest about one's religion/belief or sexual orientation if it differs from the preferences of the parents or of mainstream society, arguing that refusing to live a lie would be at the family's expense. As if relatives would be inherently incapable of adapting and accepting their loved ones for who they are. (In Swedish: *nollsummeri*)