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On The Value Laden Concept of Trust

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The concept and phenomenon of trust and its relation to leadership has recently come into focus. What role does trust play? Can trust be created strategically? Questions like these are often raised. How we conceive of and conceptualize trust is not as often discussed. Among those conceptualizations of trust available are those understanding trust as normatively value laden and those attempting to understand trust as normatively neutral. In this article I will attempt to challenge the idea that trust as a concept and phenomenon meaningfully can be understood as symmetrical and normatively neutral.

One need not continue the phrase “trust is good,” with “control is better,” as e.g., Stalin did. Let us stop with “trust is good,” and look at the implications of this evaluation. It is my conviction that trust is normally something which is normatively desirable, and that trust is a concept which cannot be exempted from a discussion of value judgment. This is perhaps because trust as a phenomenon is good in itself, even before it becomes good for something else. This point of view has consequences for understanding trust as connected to a systematic form of observation which is more or less directly claimed to be normatively neutral.¹ Such a view on analyzing trust presupposes that trust and mistrust are symmetrical and not so different. Such a point of view makes it possible for the terminology to maintain its normative neutrality (Luhmann 1979). Understanding trust by defining it as a conception characterized by normative neutrality is in the

system theoretical universe interconnected with the fundamental premise that functionality and functional self-stabilization are more important than validity. The assumption of neutrality is also interconnected with the idea that functionality is normatively neutral and is not in itself attributed value judgments. Mistrust becomes, in principle, as equally good a form of observation as trust – or more explicitly stated, the question of good becomes irrelevant in the systems theoretical universe – all that is relevant is that both observations claim to be able to reduce complexity. It is this viewpoint on value related neutrality and concept related symmetry I wish to subject to a critical evaluation. At the same time I am interested in showing that one can in fact say something about trust and trust production by exposing some of the conditions which lay at the foundation for declaring trust or mistrust.

My argument against the understanding of trust as value neutral is divided into five sections wherein I address different aspects of trust as a concept and phenomenon. In the first section, I address the trust concept's connection with other related concepts, and show the inherent attribution of value within the concept. In the following section, I show the complexity which arises in and with that trust both can be a precondition for and a product of social processes. The creation of trust can be both the intentionally intended and functionally unintended; for example, trust can be something that is desirable, but can arise without anyone having planned it. In the third section, I argue that there is a difference between having trust in a phenomenon and having trust in one's knowledge of the same phenomenon. The fourth section addresses the question in relation to the trust phenomena's strategic flexibility of form for example, the idea that one with leadership tools can consciously bring forth trust. In the conclusion, the question about trust communication is addressed. In this section I argue that trust is positively value-laden, because

sincerity is a functional and pragmatic condition for successful communication which is oriented towards understanding.

The Trust Concept's Family Resemblance

In the work *Philosophical Investigations*, the philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein asked the question, what is it which is common to board games, card games, ball games, and all other games? Wittgenstein claims that there are no specific characteristics which are common for all games, but still believes that there are resemblances and relations which connect them to each other. These resemblances, which are found in a complicated network of relations, Wittgenstein calls family resemblances. All games create a sort of family and they are similar to each other in single ways just as family members look like one another in the nose, eyes, etc., so that the commonality for the relations can be understood abstractly as *family resemblance* (Wittgenstein 1953:67).

Trust and mistrust have as concepts and phenomena a large number of related concepts. In other words, a number of concepts are to be found which we normally connect to trust or with mistrust which demonstrate a form of family resemblance. Let's imagine a situation where we have complete trust in a person, for example a leader. We have trust in the leader's knowledge and sense of morality. Our trust embraces the leader as a person and as a decision maker, as well as in all other relevant roles. We have, in other words, an ideal situation characterized by ideal trust. If we in this situation ask ourselves which words and concepts it would be the most meaningful to employ to describe our trust and mistrust – or if we ask ourselves with which words and concepts we can justify why we declare trust or mistrust, it becomes apparent that not all words are equally satisfactory.

My idea is that we, with the point of departure in the above ideal situation, can construct a linguistic test of trust declarations which has a propositional form, and which can include concepts which have a family resemblance with the concept trust. This test will examine the words which can meaningfully and respectively support and justify declarations of ideal trust and mistrust. The test will be supplemented with the simple rule that a concept and its negative counterpart cannot both and in every same regard justify the declaration of trust. Language offers, for example, a characterization of the leader as trustworthy or untrustworthy. We can not in the same regard meaningfully describe the leader as both trustworthy and untrustworthy. If we shall justify our trust to our ideal person, a reference to trustworthiness will be more sufficient than a reference to this person being untrustworthy. If we shall justify our trust - a justification which claims that the leader holds his promises and stands by his words is better than a reference to the leader's breach of promises or the unreliability of his words. On the other hand, untrustworthiness, breach of promise, and unreliability of speech can contribute to a justification of why we eventually declare mistrust in a person. The characteristic dependability will likewise be more relevant than undependability to justify why we have trust in a person. Trust can be justified with reference to a judgment of a person's knowledge, sense of justice, or legitimacy. The justification would not be sufficient if we attempt to justify our trust with regard to lack of knowledge, injustice, or illegitimacy. It is, in other words, meaningless to justify one's trust in a person with reference to this person as untrustworthy, unreliable, irresponsible, or the like. Such a justification would indicate that one has not understood the language and the meaning in the words. Here I would like to present a schema in which, I have attempted to place concepts which have a family resemblance with trust, and which could be immediately included in a justification for an declaration of

trust in the left column, and the concept's counterparts, which could not, in the right column.

The schema below shows concepts which are normally connected with trust, and with its counterpart, distrust. I do not claim that the concepts in the left column are necessary or in themselves adequate, but that they can contribute to a justification of a declaration of trust. Although the schema is not complete, the schema's left column indicates that the trust concept, culturally seen and in daily language use, is tied to a normative positive value. Trust is good, just as the other words and concepts which we can justify a declaration of trust with have a positive value.

The normativity and attribution of value can only be confirmed empirically if we were to ask a number of persons which descriptions, conditions, and attributes they would prefer that their ideal leader fit - those in the left or the right column? It is my conviction that most sensible people will prefer the schema's left side - because the desirability of these characteristics lies inherent in our culture (Anscombe 1957:69-71). Trust is normally something positive, desirable, and good. It is only because the culture and the language bear these values that we can use the words evaluatively to attribute value judgments. To claim that trust doesn't have an inherent positive value appears to me to be a misconception of culture. Such a point of view excludes the speaker from the culture to which they belong.

Trust: Concepts which have a family resemblance to trust and which could be included in and contribute to a justification for a declaration of trust.	Mistrust: Concepts which do not have a family resemblance with trust, but which could contribute to and be included in a justification for a declaration of mistrust.
Trust (trust presupposes trust) Trustworthiness Sincerity Authenticity Confiding Truth and Truthfulness Promises and Holding of Promises Honour and Honourability Morality and Ethics Accountability Hope and Faith Loyalty Legitimacy, Legality Knowledge, Objectivity, Science Justice and Fairness Free Will Security Responsibility In Control Not Manipulated One's Own Freedom and Self-Determination Acceptance of Risk (risk-involved communication). Performative Consistency (where one does what one says). Will to Continue Interaction (for example in the form of a will to cooperate). Predictability	Mistrust (mistrust becomes self-amplifying). Untrustworthiness Insincerity Inauthenticity Wary (foreign) Falsehood and Lie. Breach of Promise and Unreliable Speech. Dishonour and Dishonourability. Immorality and a Lack of Ethics. Unaccountability Hopelessness and a Lack of Faith. Disloyalty Illegitimacy, Illegality. Ignorance, Attribution of value, Overriding Belief. Injustice and Unfairness. Involuntary (and powerlessness). Insecurity Irresponsibility Lack of Control Manipulating The Others' Freedom and Self Determination. Risk Aversiveness (interpretation of danger). Manipulated Self-Portrayal and Performative Inconsistency. Unwillingness to Continue Interaction (for example, if one is uncooperative). Unpredictability

Trust as a Precondition For and a Product Of Social Processes.

There is a difference between wanting to understand trust, and wanting to create trust as a phenomenon. An executive who has realized that trust is good because it is a condition for a number of social processes will be lead to seek the means to create more trust. The wish does not spring from an observation which is neutral in the attribution of value, but from a normative idea that trust is good. Such a search assumes that trust is something one can form strategically, as well as that there is a direct relationship between means and goal. Trust and action are not always directly related. A problem with planned trust production is that many social processes presuppose one or another form of trust which is not at all dealt with and touched upon in the process itself, but in fact is its necessary foundation. Trust is confirmed and strengthened, surprisingly enough, as an unintended side effect of the same processes when they proceed successfully. In this sense, the desirable trust is created without anyone having wished for it, planned it, or been conscious of the desirable in the production of trust. It complicates a strategically planned production of trust. Let's look at two examples.

(1) The money which we exchange on the market presupposes that we have trust in money media as a unit functioning as a bearer of value. Money does not, as does gold, bear its own value. The value of money arises because we trust that it can be exchanged for gold or other wares which in themselves have value. When we make deals with one another and use monetary means to make our inter-exchange more fluid, flexible, and effective, we are involved in reproducing trust in the monetary unit. This happens without our planning it, and without it directly involving the social

process wherein our deals take place. Trust can, in this way, arise as an unintended side-effect and unplanned consequence.

(2) It is difficult to exercise leadership today if one cannot trust one's employees. It is often forgotten that good leadership over time can create and strengthen trust between the leadership and the employees. Just as trust in the monetary unit becomes strengthened in and with that money is used to mediate (facilitate) the exchange of goods, services, money, and work. Trust is a precondition for trust-creating leadership processes being able to proceed. An alternative to leadership on the basis of trust is to lead on the basis of a use of power which forbids criticism. Exercising direct power with regard to threats of sanctions is problematic in today's world. The semantics of power and surveillance have become less legitimate social conventions than they have been earlier. Patriarchal leadership through the use of commands has become an outdated leadership principle. As a modern leader, one can use semantics of trust instead of the rhetoric of threats. Today, orders are often wrapped in semantics of trust, love, or friendship. When the modern leader says: "I trust that you..." it can be an advanced way in which to give the order for the employee to accommodate to the leader's plans of action. It is a fundamental political experience that "power provokes opposition," which shall be understood in that there is seldom found the exercise of simple power which does not provoke a reaction to this power, potentially in the form of opposition. It is typical that the more one exercises power the greater the reaction there is against that same exercise of power. Bad leadership can produce opponents instead of cooperative employees. The problem connected with every form of power is therefore that those who one will direct and control with direct power turn against this power in a way which can dissolve the form of power's practical

value. Exercise of power is therefore often all too costly and demanding of resources.

We can look at a scenario where the rationalization expert, standing beside the director, calls out over the factory floor: “We must bring down costs and increase productivity. We expect an increase in efficiency of 20 percent already this year” Employee Jensen stands beside his machine and shouts back: “We are two to decide that, pal!” The more Jensen is pressured, the more time and energy Jensen will use to withstand the pressure. And Jensen often knows the game and the weak points in the machinery best. If Jensen is pressed too hard, his machine begins to break down and make faulty products. If Jensen is pressed harder he becomes ill, unmotivated, or service-hostile. It therefore becomes counter productive to press Jensen with an exercise of power if Jensen exercises opposition and counter-power. The case is presented as an example with the pedagogical goal of establishing what happens if Jensen instead had been exposed to a leadership communication coded around affection, friendship, or trust. What would Jensen’s oppositional reaction to the leader’s declaration of trust have been? Jensen would be unable to negate the trust, to say “no thanks” to the trust. He would have a difficult time legitimizing his possible opposition. By coding leadership power around trust, the oppositional reaction to power is dissolved because declarations of trust are so difficult to reject. This may be because trust is good. Who would not want the leader’s trust? It can happen that the trust one needs and which is constitutive in social processes disappears if the leader uses too much false leadership communication, where promises and threats cannot be honored.

We can present the monetary unit and leadership as examples of processes which rely upon trust and which create trust, but which are not directly in themselves related to questions of trust. When the financial market

and leadership function, trust is built up on its own unnoticed. The examples indicate that trust can both be an intentionally planned product of leadership, and can functionally arise as an unintended consequence.

If we self-referentially ask if we can have trust in our trust, the problem becomes overly complex, because the functionality becomes intended. The constitutive trust in social processes easily becomes very vulnerable, because it can only be justified functionally via its beneficial function, which is a function that often only is able to be maintained if the trust can be presupposed. Trust production presupposes trust, because many social processes could not in any way be realized without always already presupposing a minimum measure of mutual trust. Therefore trust and mistrust are more than simply neutral observations. A rhetorical analogy supporting this argument could be that if we as people causally seen have a need for clean water in order to survive, it would be unsuitable to claim that clean water / dirty water is simply an observation which can be disregarded. Clean water is valuable and value-laden, whether we recognize and observe it or not. Just as we have the need for clean water to survive, we have a need for trust in social processes where people have expectations of each other.

Trust in an Object versus Trust to One's Knowledge of the Object

That which is possible and cannot be otherwise is necessary. Necessity represents the absence of possible change and changeability. We can have knowledge in the classic platonic sense in the form of insight into necessities there where we have full control, and where everything happens according to necessity, (Bordum 2000:93). Exactly when necessity is the case, it is easy

and also safe to trust that things will be and will remain as expected. Our expectations are in such a case formed by a knowledge of the unchangeable. We do not risk anything by demonstrating trust before mistrust, when necessity comes into the picture. The mathematical relations between a right-angled triangle's three sides do not change no matter where and when we are presented with a right-angled triangle. We can therefore not be surprised or have our expectations disappointed. It is naturally not that which happens by necessity which creates the greatest need for trust, even though we can have trust in the necessary. We especially have a need for trust in connection with the contingent, where there are more choices and more possibilities open. It is here where things can change, being neither impossible nor necessary. It is not necessarily a self-contradiction when the trust problem is meaningful both in relation to the contingent and necessary. Here we have two different sorts of trust. It is the difference between having trust in one's knowledge of a phenomenon or an object we have in our sights, and to have trust in the phenomenon itself or the object we are looking at.

We can, for example, have good justifications for not trusting a person, because we know that they always do something we don't expect and don't wish, at the same time that we have trust in our knowledge of this person. Another example can be taken from a situation where we must go over a deep canyon by walking over a hanging bridge which appears to be in terrible shape. Here we can have the knowledge that the hanging bridge is unsafe. In such a scenario, we would not have trust in the object, but in our knowledge of it. Surprisingly enough we would in this situation have knowledge of the relation which justifies mistrust, at the same time that we have trust in our knowledge. In this way trust can have two radically different meanings, either as a cognitively well-grounded judgment about something else (trust in our knowledge regarding the hanging bridge) or as something

non-cognitive we can substitute with there where we don't have and maybe cannot have knowledge, and the implicated instrumental control (trust in the hanging bridge holding). Here we have neither knowledge nor control, and must run a risk. In this instance trust appears, however, to cover and replace this need. There where trust has a presuppositional form involving an acceptance of risk based upon a faith in our expectations not being disappointed in the future, can be called *naive trust*.

Trust has two almost contradictory functions as we can see in the schema below.

	Trust (or mistrust) in a Phenomenon:	Trust (or mistrust) in Knowledge of a Phenomenon
Trust as a Substitute for a Justified Expectation:	E.g. Naive trust	This category does not exist, because knowledge per definition is always justified.
Trust as a Justified Expectation:	E.g. Trust as justified in positive experiences with that or those one has trust in.	E.g. Trust in the validity of knowledge about a phenomenon.

Mistrust and trust hold each others' hand. But only by accounting for mistrust can trust be substantiated. Even though trust is something we can decide to demonstrate when confronted with a choice, our justification can well refer to a form of knowledge. We can also justify our decision with reference to experience, feelings, and other non-cognitive circumstances. There is of course always a risk that we are in error and misjudge the situation. No declaration of trust renounces fallibilism, as there is always a possibility that we may fail in our judgment. Agreement between expectations and reality harbours trust, as mistrust is fed when a disparity occurs between expectations and reality. Expectations can either be of a flexible kind, which one is capable of and willing to change, or be something which one for any price will hold on to. Expectation's level of inflexibility has therefore the character of a value judgment. Declarations of trust and mistrust become dependent on whether expectations are inflexible or variable. Such a thought process allows for an avenue between trust and mistrust we can call openness for the revision of expectations. Expectations are always products of interpretations and are mediate, contrary to beliefs, which can sometimes be formed instantaneously and immediately, as when someone throws a ball at us.

	Inflexible and Unchangeable Expectations:	Open and Variable Expectations:
Disappointed Expectations:	Gives justification for mistrust	Gives justification for revision of expectations
Fulfilled Expectations:	Gives fallible justification for trust	Gives justification for a continuation of course of action

As such, trust is good when it is based on fulfilled expectations, in that it does not block the given course of action.

The Trust Phenomenon's Strategic Transformability

Trust is sometimes thought of as the precondition for social processes, at other times as the product of these processes. The latter approach in particular often views trust as something intended one can form, construct, and bring forth in a strategically planned production. Sometimes trust appears as a means in a goal-directed action, because it shall be used for something else. At other times, trust becomes understood as a goal in itself.

	Intended:	Unintended:
Means:	E.g. Trust is understood as something one can and should build up, because one can achieve an advantage. Trust is understood as strategically variable.	E.g. When trust functions as an unrecognized, but necessary condition for other wished for social processes.
Goal in Itself:	E.g. Trust is understood as something one can and should build up, because trust is good in itself. Trust is not understood as strategically variable (but vulnerable).	The category is non-existent. The goal is always set by someone and is therefore always intended.

If we imagine an asymmetrical relationship between two actors A and B, then we can ask the question “where is trust ascribed from?” Is it A who controls trust building or B who decides whether A is worth B’s trust? Most will think that trust cannot be manipulated without that same trust becoming especially

fragile. The revelation of trust which is ungrounded and manipulated forth can in itself dissolve trust. Trust cannot be demanded; it can only be attributed and accepted. But this does not mean that we cannot strengthen the building of trust by creating trust promoting conditions such as justice, objectivity, reason, democratic encouragement of autonomy, free and equal actors, security of rights, holding promises, delivering quality in time, etc. This also applies to the expectations against which we weigh and measure our trust when we judge that these expectations in themselves should be legitimate before the trust judgment becomes legitimate. A declaration of mistrust which cannot be substantiated can, for example, undermine a speaker's trustworthiness.

The problem is that there are widely different conditions which occasion trust and mistrust. The phenomena trust and mistrust are asymmetrical, because they have different attributes and harbour different sorts of justifications. This leads to a general rule that it is difficult to make use of arguments which exemplify mistrust to substantiate trust with. The asymmetry can be shown through the difference between trust, lack of trust, and mistrust.

	Trust:	Lack of Trust:	Mistrust:
Unjustified Expectations:	E.g. Blind or naïve trust	E.g. If knowledge and information are not taken seriously	E.g. With unjustified angst and insecurity, which cannot be applied to any object.
Well-Grounded Expectations:	E.g. Based on positive experience reaped over a long time	E.g. With a total lack of knowledge and information. Healthy skepticism.	E.g. With concrete disappointment of legitimate expectations.

It is often in the cases where we for one or another reason cannot predict what other people will do or if the hanging bridge will hold, that we choose to compensate for the lack of predictability with blind and unsubstantiated trust. Analyses which are based on understanding trust in the light of predictability capture a part of the functional of the trust phenomenon, but forget that knowledge of something as unforeseeable in practice gets us to take up rules of relations and the like precisely because we take in and absorb unpredictability in our practice. If the hanging bridge appears not be able to

hold, we grab hold of a lifeline before we go over the cliff. If it appears on the other hand to hold, perhaps we don't, and the accident becomes much greater. This is similar to when the seller makes a credit evaluation so that they can at least have trust that the buyer can act as a buyer. In a certain sense the relationship between our judgment, risk, danger, and trust is less risky when we know that something is unpredictable and uncontrollable. We cannot be surprised by the unpredictable, when we know that it is unpredictable. Analyses which understand trust as too closely connected to prediction fail to see this relationship. The argumentation shows again that the distinction trust/mistrust is not at all normatively neutral and neutral in value, one reason being because expectations always have a direction and are value-laden.

Trust-Inspiring Communication

Trust is an essential foundation for most social processes where one meets another in a face-to-face communication. Establishing trust in electronically mediated communications like the Internet where people can easily fake their true identity becomes a real problem. The more voluntary and self-organized unions of free and equal people are, the more important trust becomes as an informal resource for social integration. Trust also acts as a psychological need (Giddens 1994:87). We do not feel as comfortable in surroundings characterized by mistrust as in surroundings characterized by trust. Trust appears perhaps for this reason as a positive cultural value. It lies as a part of our cultural inheritance that trust, everything else being equal, is simply "better" than mistrust. If another does not have trust in me, it is not

good; others' trust is immediately good to have. It is not pleasant to be the one no-one trusts.

Trust plays a role in our communication with each other. We normally have trust in those who act performatively consistent with their self-description and who keep their promises. We do not have trust in those who say one thing, but manipulate and mean something else. Those who communicate simply to achieve an effect are not sincere. Trust breaks down from *the false, the lie, manipulation, insincerity, and the unauthentic portrayal of self*. Trust relations presuppose that one can trust both in the communication and in the action coordination the undistorted dialogue can yield. Others' trust typically arises when one appears in a positive light, lives up to one's self-description, and does what one says over time. We normally have trust in those who act according to norms, in that they act predictably and correctly (as long as they obey the norms).

If we involve the premise of the future and others' freedom to manage themselves, and thereby the possibility for otherwise trustworthy persons to change their actions, trust can be seen as the acceptance of communication which involves risk. In receiving a communicated message, we choose to trust in the sender's authenticity, sincerity and good will.

When trust is to be communicated it can be self-dissolving if a person repeatedly and loudly speaks of their own sincerity. It becomes phony and false. When one has claimed one's own authenticity several times, the repetition alone in itself will seem an unauthentic copy. Authenticity and sincerity constitute essential communicative conditions for the creation of trust. It is the dimension of sincerity in communication which creates trustworthiness and over time creates trust. Sincerity is, according to Jürgen Habermas, a necessary pragmatic condition for successful communication. According to Jürgen Habermas' interpretation of communication's inherently

necessary (formal-pragmatic) presuppositions, each speaker whom in a dialogue will come to mutual understanding with others, shall ask and be able to meet the following demands. The expression shall be (1) syntactically comprehensible and *understandable*, (2) cognitively *true*, (3) normatively and socially *right*, (4) as well as *truthful and sincerely* contributed. (ad 1) The expression must be understandable so that the speaker and hearer can understand each other, before any belief in a proposition can be shared and communication can be successful. (ad 2) The speaker must have the intention to contribute a true propositional content, in that the hearer can take part in the speaker's knowledge, so that it can be shared. (ad 3) The speaker must express themselves consistently with the norms and values which constitute the common normative background, in order for the speaker and hearer to be able to reach mutual understanding. If there is a break with norms already in and with an expression, the likelihood for the creation of consensus understood as a justified sharing of beliefs is very small. (ad 4) The speakers must express themselves truthfully; in other words, give an expression which is sincere, and in agreement with the thoughts and conditions which in the point of departure and in principle only are accessible for the speaker themselves. The possibilities for establishing an optimal understanding are made use of only if there is established mutual trust in and with the speaker. This can happen if the speaker expresses their intentions sincerely so that the speech's expressions for the speaker become trustworthy, reliable, and create trust (Habermas 1999:22). Sincere and truthful use of language therefore creates trust.

Insincere, unreliable, inauthentic, and untruthful use of language, to the contrary, creates mistrust because the speaker in their speech expresses a manipulated self-portrayal and gives a faulty impression of themselves. The promise which lies inherent in the self-portrayal is not held. The self and the

self-description do not match. That sincerity is a necessary pragmatic condition for successful communication can be easily seen, if we take an example of a father who asks his son what he wants for a Christmas present. If the son is not sincere and expresses himself in agreement with his inner wishes, the son cannot get his wishes fulfilled. We can on this background substantiate that there can be found trust-weakening and trust-strengthening communication, and that insincere communication weakens the creation of trust.

Trust and Validity

As a final argument of why trust is good I will present an interpretation of why trust and validity are interconnected, and thereby present an understanding of trust.

Habermas has argued that validity understood as the possible and actual arguments for a proposition measured in a discourse against the possible and actual arguments against the proposition is differentiated into three types of validity-claims. Validity is measured according to truth, rightness and truthfulness. If we in the following take a monological perspective in our interpretation of the validity claims then persons can establish three different kinds of basic relationships, (a) a relationship to themselves; (b) a relationship to reality; and (c) a relationship to other persons. These relations correspond to taking a subjective, an objective and an inter-subjective attitude.

The validity claim truthfulness is a necessary condition for establishing all the possible relations to oneself. Whether we are talking of self-consciousness, self-critique, self-development, self-legislation or any relation of that kind where one relates to oneself, it presupposes that the one involved

is sincere and truthful to themselves before such a relationship can actually be established. In this way truthfulness is constitutive for all relations to oneself. The relations are simply not established if truthfulness is not established. Truthfulness becomes constitutive for all relations to the internal subjective world, to which a person has privileged access.

The validity claim truth is a necessary condition for establishing all the possible relations to reality. In order to grasp reality one needs a true belief about reality in order to actually have that reality represented and present at hand. False beliefs mean exactly that one's beliefs do not in any way meaningfully represent reality. Things, actions, and events and anything in the physical world of things presuppose that the person holds true beliefs about them to connect to the objective world as such. Due to fallibilism and the dualistic distinction between subject and object, we don't know whether a belief is true in the objective sense, but we know whether holding a belief is justified, warranted by experience, and whether we can claim something with rational assertibility. Nevertheless, truth becomes constitutive for all relations to the objective world of things about which we can make true claims.

The validity claim rightness is a necessary condition for establishing legitimate relationships between free and rational persons. If a relationship between persons is not legitimate, a free and rational person would not want that relationship to continue as a social relation. In general, legitimacy is justified with reference to norms, which in turn may be justified deontologically as objective norm. Legitimacy is always judged by the other, and can never be owned and controlled by a single person. Rightness is constitutive for all relations to the social world of relations recognized as legitimate by those involved. This basic relation demanding legitimacy and mutual recognition

before it can be socially stabilized and be reproducible by rational and free persons is the foundation on which all other interactions, transactions, and communications are built.

In this reading of Habermas (which is admittedly monological and ontological because we start from a real person and how that person can possibly relate to anything) the result is that the validity claims we exchange in discourses are not merely arbitrary, but are derived from a practical and factual necessity. We can in our practices only establish those relationships if the validity conditions are adequately fulfilled. Especially the relationship between persons, which presupposes legitimacy to be a socially integrating and well-ordered social relation, may account for why trust is not only good but also needed in social practices. This is because establishing any relationship empirically to another person which is not legitimate will be equal to undermining this person's ability to act as a rational and free person. If they were free and rational, any illegitimate relationship would be broken off or not even be established in the first place. As I understand it, it is this implicit threat to freedom and rationality which guides the judgments of trust. We basically trust persons with whom we interact, communicate, and do transactions with when the relationship is fundamentally legitimate. We distrust persons who sustain an illegitimate relationship and thereby in consequence diminish our rationality and freedom. This is why the problem of trust is internally connected to the demand for legitimacy, for freedom, and for rationality. Trust is good because it demonstrates that the relationship in which we interact with other persons is legitimate and can be normatively justified as right according to justified norms. Trust is good because norms are good. The argument suggested above also explains why trust is so

constitutive for social relationships and to the existence of informal social co-operation.

Conclusion

I have in various ways sought to argue that trust / mistrust are value-laden phenomena (and concepts); in an attempt to show that any presupposition about value neutrality does not hold in our culture. At the same time I have addressed the problem which trust production involves by addressing essential preconditions and connections. In every section there is an argument for the value-laden nature of the trust concept. Concepts related to the trust concept, and which show a family resemblance with trust are value-laden concepts. Trust has a value constitutive for desired social processes, whether that value is acknowledged and planned or not. The essential reason behind the attempt of some leaders to use trust and trust production as a strategic means to the design of leadership and organization, is that it is connected with something positive and good, something which is not neutral in value. The knowledge of the phenomena one evaluates has value in relation to a declaration of trust or mistrust. Expectations can be more or less flexible, which in itself reflects a type of value judgment. There is further a value difference in sincere and trust-inspiring communication on the one hand, and trust-weakening communication on the other. An essential motivation for sincerity in one's communication with others is that this is a pragmatic condition for the creation of trust. Establishing legitimate interpersonal relationships and accommodating the actions of other people as rational and free beings will also create trust. All in all several grounds to

demonstrate that trust and mistrust are not value-neutral and should not be understood, nor analyzed as if they were normatively neutral. This is important to leaders caring about trust as a concept and as a phenomena.

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ⁱ Understanding trust as normatively neutral and as merely a means of reducing social complexity (and if we take trust in material things into account material complexity) seems to be the standpoint taken by Niklas Luhmann and other to Luhmann related thinkers. The ideals of value free perspectives and observations we find in positivism and some systems theoretic approaches