Social identity and emotion: the meeting of psychoanalysis and sociology

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Abstract

This paper attempts to develop a framework for understanding social identities by linking together ideas from two disciplines which are normally pursued separately from each other namely, sociology and psychoanalysis. Drawing on the work of Craib (1989, 1994, 1998a) Bion (1961) and Scheff (1994a) in psychoanalysis and Mann (1986, 1993a, 1995, 1997) in sociology, the main argument is that social identities such as national identity are not just the result of sociological factors such as social classification, boundaries and processes of identification, they also have an important emotional dimension which coexists with but cannot be reduced to the social. In order to understand the persistence and indeed strengthening of nationalism and national identities in the contemporary world, we need to take account not just of changes in the inter-relationships between economics, politics and culture at the global level, but also of the ways in which they may now be coming to inter-relate with the kind of unconscious psychological processes and strong emotions such as love, hate, shame and anger, which occur within groups. The paper begins with a critique of existing sociological approaches to identity followed by an attempt to develop an alternative approach based on the psychoanalytic concept of emotional inter-subjectivity. By means of a case study of British trade unions in the 1980's and 1990's, it then goes on to show how unconscious psychological processes and strong feelings may now be articulating with sociological processes to form a mutually reinforcing loop which is strengthening and reinforcing nationalism in a sociological context in which other aspects of society are globalising. Finally, it is suggested that the reason why sociologists need to take feelings seriously in the contemporary world is that they may now be combining with sociological changes to strengthen and reinforce nationalism and the principle of nationality in situations in which it might be more productive to question it.

Introduction

One of the biggest problems of our time, both in sociology and in political life in general, is explaining the resurgence at the end of the twentieth century of apparently 'irrational' ethnic conflict and nationalism. Far from heralding the 'end of history' (Fukuyama, 1989) the triumph of capitalism in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union has been accompanied by an astonishing and

unexpected resurgence of ethno-national conflict. Similarly in the West, globalisation and European integration, seen by many as heralding the end of the nation state and the emergence of new forms of global and European identity, also seem to have been associated with increasing nationalism in the heartlands of Western European states. How then, can we understand and explain the persistence and indeed strengthening of forms of national identity which appear to run counter to economic and cultural forces in the contemporary world?

There is now general agreement in sociology that one of the most important concepts in enabling us to understand new forms of politics at the end of the twentieth century is the concept of identity. In order to understand why individuals participate in political action we need some conception of political agency which in turn presupposes an understanding of how individuals see themselves. Identity is now thought to sit at the interface between subjective positions and social and cultural situations (Woodward, 1997). As Stuart Hall (1996) puts it, identity is the meeting point, or point of 'suture' between on the one hand, individual subjects with unconscious psychological processes and on the other hand, social and cultural processes like discourses and discursive practices.

This paper attempts to go beyond Hall (1997) in arguing that because social identities are the outcome of an interplay between sociological and unconscious psychological processes, they also have an important emotional dimension which coexists with, but cannot be reduced to the social. As Craib (1998a) points out, despite the shift from structure to culture in conceptualisations of the social, the link between system and agency has always been somewhat problematic and unsatisfactorily handled in sociology. Sociology operates with an impoverished conception of the actor in which action either tends to be reduced to system or vice versa, but either way the concept of action tends to be relatively underdeveloped.[1] Following Craib (1998a) my aim is to provide a richer conception of action by adding a psychodynamic dimension which focuses on the limits of social factors and on why actors (both individually and in groups) do not necessarily always behave in what might seem to sociologists to be the most sociologically rational ways.[2]

The main argument is that in order to understand the persistence and indeed strengthening of nationalism and national identities in the West, we need a concept of identity which takes account not just of sociological processes such as social classification, boundaries and processes of identification, but also of strong emotions such as love, hate, shame, anger and so on which sociology either overlooks entirely or reduces to the social. While there is now a huge sociological literature on nationalism, the emotional underpinnings of nationalistic conflicts and discourses tend to have been relatively unexplored by sociologists who focus almost exclusively on the political, cultural and economic dimensions (Armstrong, 1995). Regardless of whether nationalism is explained in terms of ethnies (Smith, 1986) uneven waves of industrialisation (Gellner, 1983) print capitalism (Anderson, 1996) the emergence of the modern

state (Mann, 1992, 1995) or culture, identity and discourse (Calhoun, 1997; McCrone, 1998) feelings such as shame, humiliation and pride (ie national honour) tend to be reduced to sociological factors rather than analysed in their own right as relatively autonomous from the social.[3] Nationalism is conceptualised as a purely social phenomena in which actors are treated as black boxes within which what goes on inside is relatively unexplored. I would suggest however, that in the context of recent trends to globalisation, the neglect of the psychological dimension may be having a particularly limiting effect on sociological approaches to nationalism because the emergence of a relatively integrated global economy and a divided nation state system may now be providing a sociological context which is highly conducive to the play of emotions which are coming to strengthen and reinforce nationalism in a world in which the economy is globalising.

The paper begins with a critique of existing sociological approaches to identity, followed by an exposition of the work of Craib (1989, 1994, 1998a) Bion (1961) and Scheff (1994a) which attempts to sketch out an alternative approach based on the psychoanalytic concept of emotional intersubjectivity. Finally, I will attempt to illustrate the argument by means of a case study of the discourse of British trade unions in the 1980's and 1990's, which shows how we cannot understand the unions' responses to their position in the relatively integrated global economy and the divided nation state system without taking account of strong feelings such as shame, anger, rage and so on which now permeate their identities and underpin the discourse.

Sociological theories of identity and emotion

While there is a rich literature on identity and indeed, also on emotions in sociology today, this has so far failed to illuminate the emotional dimension of collective identities in the contemporary world. As Craib (1998a) argues, the main reason for this is that while different sociological approaches conceptualise the relation between individuals and society in different ways, they all tend to be based on a cognitive view of social actors in which feelings are either overlooked entirely or reduced to the social. This can be seen, not just in two of the most widely used sociological models of identity, namely Jenkins' interactionist approach and post structuralism's cultural or discursive approach but also, paradoxically, in the newly expanding sociology of the emotions.

While Jenkins (1996) for example, conceptualises both individual and collective identities as arising from an ongoing dialectic between internal self definitions (the unique individuality of Mead's 'I' and external definitions of the self taken in from the outside (the attitudes of significant others or Mead's 'me'), when he applies the model to individual self identity he emphasises the external social dimension to a much greater extent than the individual dimension and omits the unconscious and emotional dimensions of identity

entirely (Craib, 1998a).[4] By contrast, post structuralists however, conceptualise identity as emerging from outside ourselves on the basis of difference rather than similarity. Drawing on both Foucault's concept of discourse and Lacan's concept of the unconscious as a system of signification (ie as structured like a language) Hall (1992, 1996) and Woodward (1997) for example, conceptualise identities as subject positions constructed in discourse as an effect of disciplinary power.[5] Following Lacan, they argue that although we may experience ourselves as unified, this is a phantasy formed during the mirror phase when the infant sees itself reflected in the mirror of the other's look, or literally in the mirror, and this in turn opens the child's relation to symbolic systems outside itself, such as language, culture and sexual difference. As Craib (1998a) points out however, while Hall and Woodward clearly go beyond Jenkins in recognising the importance of unconscious psychological processes in explaining subjectivity, they still have a very cognitive view of social actors which overlooks emotion and reduces the unconscious, together with the defence mechanisms through which identity is created, to a social product, namely language.

Somewhat paradoxically perhaps, these tendencies are also evident in the rapidly expanding literature on the sociology of emotion, which as Lupton (1996) points out, can be seen as ranging on a continuum from weak to strong social constructionism. Weak social constructionists such as Hochschild (1983) for example, recognise that there may by a limited range of natural emotional responses that are biologically given and therefore exist independently of socio-cultural influences, although the ways in which they are experienced and expressed are said to be shaped by power relationships in the wider society (Lupton, 1996). The main problem with Hochschild's account however, is that she tends to overemphasise social constraint, actors are seen as passively responding to the norms of emotion management which constrain and restrict selfhood in the process of reinforcing social and economic processes (Lupton, 1996). Strong social constructionists however, arguing from a post structuralist perspective see emotions as purely socially constructed, 'by people who are located in a range of interacting discourses and at certain positions within those discourses' (Harre and Gillet, 1994). In an attempt to overcome the extreme social constructionist tendency to reduce emotions entirely to discourse, Burkitt (1997) suggests that emotions also have a physical as well as a cultural dimension, although he still agrees with the strong social constructionist view that emotions originate in discursive relationships between individuals rather than internally within them.

Like theories of identity then, the newly expanding sociology of emotions is also based on a cognitive conception of social actors which paradoxically overlooks feelings (Craib, 1998a). Emotions are either seen as social products (often produced by discourse) or they are thought to be so constrained by society there is little or no scope for individual creativity (Craib, 1998a; Lupton, 1996). While Burkitt does not reduce emotion entirely to discourse, he still reduces it to society because he sees it as arising solely in the context of real

social relationships in the present. As Craib (1998a) points out however, this conception of the link between the internal and external worlds is too simple because emotions may also arise from unconscious conflicts within individuals which then come to be superimposed on current relationships. Following Craib (1998a) I would argue that rather than simply assuming that emotions are a social product, we need to conceptualise the internal emotional world as separate from the external social world, with its own dynamics, its own causes and its own patterns which accompany, but cannot be reduced to society. In order to do this we need to link sociology and psychoanalysis together. We need to complement sociological analyses of social contexts with a psychoanalytic understanding of the way in which the individual psyche is constructed and operates. The question then, is how should the relationship between the two disciplines be conceptualised? How can we analyse the emotional and social characteristics of identities alongside each other in the same model without reducing one to the other?

Emotional intersubjectivity

Drawing on the work of Craib (1989, 1994, 1998a) Bion (1961) and Scheff (1994a) I will now go on to propose a way of thinking about the emotional dimension of social identities and social relationships based on the psychoanalytic concept of emotional intersubjectivity. While the concept of emotional intersubjectivity was initially formulated by Craib (1998a) as the foundation for a new way of thinking about identity in sociology, the same basic idea also underlies Bion's (1961) work on group processes and Scheff's (1994a) analysis of the emotional dynamics of international politics. I will therefore begin by talking about emotional intersubjectivity as it affects individuals and come onto the ways in which it operates in collectivities later.

Craib: emotional intersubjectivity and identity

In a pioneering attempt to apply psychoanalytic ideas to sociological theories of identity Craib (1998a) puts forward a new concept of identity which is fundamentally different from the sociological approaches discussed so far. The novelty of Craib's (1998a) position is that he sees identities as having an important emotional dimension which is also part of a wider emotional intersubjectivity with other people. The central idea underlying his approach is the psychoanalytic idea that the primary and most basic form of intersubjectivity between individuals is emotional rather than cognitive as it is in sociology. In psychoanalysis, human beings are seen as being linked to each other by a profound emotional intersubjectivity or emotional communication in which they continually give and receive emotional messages, although this is usually unconscious and not recognised by those involved (Craib, 1998a). By virtue of being human we are all thought to share a range of emotions with

which we communicate to each other and also share with each other (Craib, 1998a).

Craib's (1998a) approach therefore involves a rather different conception of both the individual and the relation between the individual and society from that usually found in sociology. While individuals are seen as existing in a social context they are also thought to have a subjective inner life, located in internal psychic space which is relatively autonomous from the social (Craib, 1998a). Far from being determined by society, individuals are seen as absorbing and processing social forces such as discourses, ideologies, structural positions or whatever through a complex inner process located in internal psychic space which Craib (1998a) calls 'experience'.

Craib's (1998a) concept of subjective inner life is based on the British Object Relations School of Psychoanalysis, particularly the work of Klein and Winnicott. The crux of his argument is that the emotional dimension of identity is rooted in the unconscious object relations, phantasies and defence mechanisms identified by Klein as characteristic of very early life. Emotional intersubjectivity is in fact seen as operating through the defence mechanisms of splitting, projection and projective identification which in addition to protecting individuals against anxiety, also operate as unconscious forms of emotional communication. In Klein's view for example, the earliest and most primitive form of unconscious emotional communication occurring between babies and caretakers is projective identification.[6] The baby communicates its needs by putting its feelings into the carer so that the carer experiences the same feelings within themself and can deal with them on the baby's behalf (Craib, 1989).

Klein then goes on to identify a developmental process in which infants move from what she calls the paranoid schizoid to the depressive position (Craib, 1997). In the paranoid schizoid position the infant deals with anxiety by splitting the world into good and bad and then introjecting its good feelings and projecting its bad feelings onto an outside object. This then leaves the child feeling threatened in case the bad feelings come back to attack it from the outside, so that the rest of its destructive feelings are converted into aggressive feelings aimed at attacking the already projected threat (Craib, 1989). As the ego strengthens however, and becomes more able to tolerate some of its own previously projected feelings there is a crucial shift into the depressive position as the infant becomes aware that both its love and hate are directed at the same object – namely the mother as a whole and separate person (Craib, 1989; 1997; 1998a).[7]

In Winnicottian theory the depressive position is thought to be intimately linked to the capacity to symbolise which is in turn associated with the transitional area and transitional objects.[8] For Winnicott, the transitional area is a vitally important region of the psyche in which internal phantasy meets meets external reality, within which the ability to symbolise enables us to create something new. The transitional area plays a crucially important role in Craib's (1998a) conception of identity because he sees it not just as an area of creativity

and relative autonomy from external social forces but also as the source of our personal identity. Rather than simply taking in what is outside us and reinforcing it in our actions, Craib (1998a) argues that we take it into the unconscious where it is transformed by our unconscious conflicts and phantasies into something new and even within the limits of external social constraint we always have some degree of autonomy in how we respond.

The implication then, is that while the internal and external worlds are separate and independently constituted with their own causes and their own dynamics they constellate around each other in a loop in Winnicott's transitional area. While on the one hand external reality may modify or change stereotypes (as in psychoanalysis for example) on the other hand, internal object relations may also come to be superimposed on current relationships so that the external world is taken over by the internal world and we respond to others emotionally as if they were disliked parts of our own selves, rather than separate individuals with their own characteristics (Craib, 1998a). In adult life, splitting and projection for example, occur whenever we fail to see some threatening or unpleasant part of our own make up in ourselves but see it readily in other people whereas projective identification occurs when we behave in such a way as to lead the other person to experience the feared quality in themselves (Craib, 1989). One of the problems with these processes however, is that the illusory sense of goodness and idealisation they produce makes it harder than it might otherwise be to resolve differences and find compromises in social relationships.[9]

Bion: emotional intersubjectivity and group processes

Drawing on Bion's pioneering studies of group dynamics I now want to suggest that emotional intersubjectivity also has a social origin in the processes and dynamics which occur within groups. Bion's (1961) work shows how adults in groups can get caught up in processes involving a massive regression to Klein's paranoid schizoid defences so that under certain circumstances group members unite to respond to outsiders (and sometimes even to some of their own members) emotionally, as if they were disliked parts of their own selves (Craib, 1997). In Bion's view, the reason why this happens is that individuals in groups inevitably experience a conflict between wanting to be part of the group for the security it brings and also feeling constrained by what he calls the 'group mentality.' The group mentality is defined as the unanimous expression of the emotional will of the group which stifles independent thought and affects individuals in a very unpleasant way whenever they think or say anything which is different from what the group wants to hear. Group members therefore experience contradictory combinations of feelings because pleasant feelings like security are always experienced in combination with less pleasant ones such as hate, frustration and inadequacy. This leads to anxiety which group members defend against by resorting to one of three basic assumptions, all of which are based on the defence mechanisms described by Klein as

characteristic of very early life, namely splitting, projection and projective identification.

Basic assumptions are tacit assumptions or psychotic premises (Segal, 1995) about the purpose of the group which are not expressed explicitly but which give meaning to its behaviour. Group members sharing the same emotions behave *as if* they all had the same tacit understanding about the purpose of the group, namely that it had met for one of three purposes – fight/flight, pairing or dependency. These give rise to three basic assumption groups the most important of which, in the present context, is the flight fight group. In the flight fight group individuals try to keep the goodness of the group separate from the badness by splitting off the pleasant feelings (such as security) which they want from the disliked feelings (such as hate and anger) and projecting the disliked feelings onto an external enemy or an internal scapegoat which is then experienced as hostile and destructive, so that the good feelings can be preserved within the group (Craib, 1989).

The most important thing about basic assumptions is that while they are inherent in all groups at least to some degree, under certain circumstances they can undermine the explicit goal oriented task of the group. Bion (1961) argues that if a specialised work group is able to use the basic assumption underpinning it to establish organisation and structure, members will cooperate in work tasks as thinking individuals, but if it is unable to do so, the group will resort to becoming a basic assumption group in which individuals lose their capacity for criticism and rational thought and primitive paranoid forms of thinking emerge which result in a loss of effective contact with reality. Bion also makes the point rather forcibly that the emotions and behaviour within a basic assumption group are not simply evoked by the leader's discourses or political rhetoric. On the contrary, he emphasises that the leader's power comes from sharing the same emotions as every other member of the group because they are all affected by the same basic assumption. In a flight fight group for example, he argues that the leader is invariably someone with a pronounced capacity for fighting or flight. The implication then, is that whether they are citizens of nation states or members of political organisations, individual group members are just as responsible as the leader for the emotions and behaviour of the group.

In a bold attempt to take Bion's work further, Jaques (1953) and Menzies Lyth (1988; 1989) suggest that when group relations become institutionalised in the form of permanent organisations such as businesses, hospitals, nation states and so on, basic assumptions tend to give rise to paranoid 'social defence mechanisms' which come to be reified in the roles, structure, culture and discourses of institutional life, undermining the effectiveness of the organisation's explicit goals. The crux of the argument is that in objectively stressful or conflictual social situations, the anxiety generated by external social conditions combines with the psychotic anxiety evoked by membership of the group to precipitate individual regression to primitive paranoid defences which are then projected and given objective existence in the social structure and culture of the

organisation (Menzies Lyth, 1988).[10] What happens is that individuals unconsciously collude with others to project their bad internal objects onto common external objects so that phantasy relationships are established which are then collectively reinforced by introjection (Jaques, 1953). Social conflicts in the external social world therefore come to be reinforced by social defence mechanisms so that aggression is collectively displaced onto subgroups and external enemies (Jaques, 1953). This is not to suggest that organisations become psychotic, because of course defences are only used by individuals, but it does mean that in objectively stressful social situations, group relations are likely to be associated with manifestations of unreality, splitting, hostility and suspicion which magnify the original conflict, making it much more difficult to resolve, because change threatens to upset not just the economic, cultural and political interests at stake, but also the underlying social defences against psychotic anxiety (Jaques, 1977).[11]

Scheff: emotional intersubjectivity and international conflict

Following Scheff (1994a) I now want to suggest that one of the main ways in which unconscious group processes drive nationalistic discourses and exaggerate ethnic and political conflict is through feelings of shame and rage. Scheff (1994a) sees shame as playing a vitally important role in social relationships because it is a 'social' emotion which signals the strength of social bonds, both between individuals and between groups. Whereas pride (the obverse of shame) is said to generate and signal a secure bond, shame is seen as generating and signalling a weak bond which is threatened by too much closeness (engulfment) or too much distance (isolation). I would suggest however, that Bion's analysis of the flight/fight group indicates that engulfment and isolation are in fact complementary sides of the same phenomena and that both are ultimately based on the defence mechanisms of splitting and projection.[12]

The crux of Scheff's (1994a) argument is that protracted conflict occurs when one or both sides feel shame because they have been humiliated or threatened, but the shame is not acknowledged. In Scheff's (1994a) view, the problem with denied shame is that it leads directly to anger as a way of avoiding the painful feelings of shame – and then we feel ashamed of being angry. When it is completely unacknowledged, he argues that the alternation between shame and anger can lead to a feeling trap or a closed shame anger shame loop which generates resentment and hatred because the shame driving the loop is outside awareness, so that the aggression is compulsive. His main point is that if the disputants stick to the topic of the dispute and ignore the emotions (ie the shame) the conflict is likely to escalate because the content of the dispute will become less important than the hidden emotions which take over and in turn prevent the protagonists resolving the topic. His discourse analysis of the causes of the first and second world wars shows for example, how both French (1871–1914) and German (1918–1945) nationalism were

motivated by unacknowledged shame and rage. In the French case however, there was sufficient verbal acknowledgement of shame in the form of conceptions of national honour, humiliation and revenge to prevent a descent into complete madness, whereas in the case of German nationalism shame was completely unacknowledged, denied, rationalised and projected onto other groups. Hitler for example, attributed vengeful motives to his enemies, the French, Negroes and Jews, rather than to himself, which in turn explains his more or less continuous shame rage spiral.

Finally, like Bion, Scheff argues that far from evoking their followers' feelings as a result of their own rhetoric, as sociological conceptions of discourse often assume,[13] charismatic leaders are linked to their followers by the fact that they all share the same strong feelings. In Scheff's (1994a) view, leaders are perceived as charismatic when they *express* their publics' shame anger spiral, because this temporarily at least, makes people feel better by justifying their rage and reducing their shame. The reason why Hitler for example, had such a strong hold over the German people was precisely because he expressed and therefore sanctioned and mitigated his publics' shame and anger. His expression of rage and projection of German shame onto the Jews, temporarily interrupted the chain of overt shame and rage, lessening the pain of the average German by implying it was not their fault (Scheff, 1994a).

Emotional intersubjectivity, social defence mechanisms and sociology

In summary then, I would suggest that the key to understanding why social conflict often appears to be so intractable lies in the way in which social identities and social conflicts in the external social world combine with the kind of unconscious psychological processes and strong feelings which occur within groups. As Halton (1994) points out, when splitting and projection occur at the group level they tend to exploit and to occur across existing economic, cultural and political boundaries in the external social world such as those of nationality, ethnicity, social class and so on, particularly when these have also been institutionalised in the form of permanent organisations such as nation states, ethnic organisations and trade unions for example. Because groups inevitably arouse anxiety which individuals unconsciously try to defend against with psychotic mechanisms, cultural identities tend to be underpinned by internal phantasy so that conflicts in the external social world come to be experienced in a very polarised way as a battle between the forces of good and evil, victims and villains, them and us, which considerably reinforces the original dispute and prevents the protagonists seeing what they have in common and where a realistic political solution might lie. As Craib (1998b) argues, it is as if group processes completely absorb individual processes. The pressure on the group leader(s) to come up with solutions to relieve the group's anxiety leads to a moralisation of political discourse so that issues are not seen in realistic terms as practical problems to be solved but emotionally as moral issues for which someone must be blamed (Craib, 1998b; Segal, 1995).

Groups therefore respond to social conflict not just in terms of conflicting interests, discourses or ideologies, but also in terms of psychotic processes or social defence mechanisms, which give the initial conflict a very powerful emotional twist so that it ceases to be just about material resources, cultural differences or power and takes on an additional emotional dimension which magnifies and exaggerates the initial dispute making it much more difficult to resolve. This raises the question then, of how these kinds of unconscious group processes operate in relation to nationalism. Under what sociological conditions are splitting and projection most likely to strengthen national identities so that they then become nationalistic in the sense of being xenophobic and/or intolerant of minorities within the state?

Rearticulating the social and the psychological: national identities and social defence mechanisms

I would suggest that the easiest way to understand the sociological conditions in which unconscious psychological processes are most likely to strengthen national identities is with the help of Mann's (1986, 1993a) IEMP model of power. Instead of seeing societies as bounded totalities within which social relations are patterned by a prime mover such as culture or the economy, Mann sees social relationships as the outcome of four overlapping, intersecting socio-spacial networks of power, namely ideological, economic, military and political. The crucial point is that while the economy, politics and culture inter-relate with each other they are also different and separate from each other, with their own dynamics, and in the real world their geographical boundaries seldom if ever coincide.

At a general level, nationalism can be thought of as a cultural discourse or ideology which holds that states as political units and nations as cultural groups should be congruent since on the one hand, cultural autonomy is thought to depend on having ones own state, while on the other hand, it is also claimed that political legitimacy should be based on the nation, in the sense of the interests or the will of the people (Calhoun, 1997; Mann, 1992). As Mann (1995) points out, nations and nationalism first emerged in the eighteenth century as part of an attempt to democratise the absolutist state so that it gradually came to represent a territorially bounded citizenry conceived as a nation. Before the eighteenth century, state boundaries did not correspond with either economic or cultural groups which were both highly local and relatively international. On the one hand, states contained diverse religious, ethnic and linguistic groups and on the other hand cultural, religious and linguistic ties also extended across state boundaries. Since states were almost exclusively concerned with external military affairs rather than with the regulation of social relationships within their boundaries and since ordinary people had no role in politics, political boundaries were largely irrelevant to most peoples' lives. During the nineteenth and twentieth centuries however, as

states expanded their civilian functions,[14] extended political and social citizenship[15] and attempted to culturally homogenise their citizenries, they gradually came to be transformed into nation states[16] in which ordinary people increasingly came to see themselves as members of an exclusive, legally bounded national community based on social closure against both foreigners and minorities within, who were often suspected of being in the service of external enemies (Brubaker, 1992; Mann, 1993a, 1993b; Mommsen, 1990).

I would suggest that because national citizenship is an exclusive club based on social closure against those not seen as belonging to the nation (whether inside or outside the state) national boundaries provide a very powerful basis for the play of unconscious paranoid processes in which members of a nation are able to rid themselves of bad internal objects and destructive impulses by projecting them onto commonly shared and accepted external enemies (Jaques, 1953). The emotional power of nationalism and the speed with which states are able to mobilise nationalism in times of crisis may therefore be rooted not only in sociological processes such as cultural discourses and the very real citizenship gains states provided for their members, but also in strong feelings arising from unconsciously motivated attempts by groups, to use nation states and national institutions to protect themselves against the recurrence of early psychotic anxiety. In times of national crisis, the anxiety generated by external social conditions is likely to combine with the kind of unconscious psychotic processes occurring within groups to produce nationalist social defence mechanisms, so that paranoid anxiety is transmuted into fear of known and identifiable enemies in the external social world who can be fought against in real life, with the social support and cooperation of comrades in arms rather than alone in the isolation of the unconscious inner world (Jaques, 1953). Indeed, it could be suggested that the reason why nation states are seldom referred to as 'it' but are revered and personified as primal authority figures such as mother or father (Mann, 1993) is not only cultural but also because of the close connection between national identities and processes of splitting and projection characteristic of early infancy. While in themselves, national identities which simply involve seeing oneself as a member of a national community are not necessarily nationalistic in the sense of being xenophobic or intolerant of minorities, in conflictual or anxiety provoking social situations they may easily become so.

Drawing on Mann's (1993a) analysis, I would suggest that when the people have been brought into the state and states are responsible for providing social and political citizenship rights, splitting and projection are most likely to strengthen national identities when the geographical boundaries of different sociological networks of power do not correspond with each other. As Mann's (1993a, 1995, 1997) analysis shows, one of the main reasons why nationalism may be increasing in the contemporary world is that we now have an increasing geographical disjunction between a divided nation state system, which is the only source of democratic political participation in the contemporary world and transnational economic and cultural elements such as an increasingly

global economy and world religions which challenge or do not fit into the nation state system (Craib, 1994, Scheff, 1994a; Segal, 1995). Within this general context I would also suggest that national identities are most likely to become strongly nationalistic among groups which are confined or 'caged' (Mann, 1993a) in weak or declining nation states, who feel relatively excluded from the polity (or who want to exclude others) and who are also experiencing significant economic and social dislocation as result of economic adjustments in response to market forces at the international level, particularly when feelings of humiliation and shame are also involved (Scheff, 1994b; Hall, 1995; Christie, 1998).

Because nationalism takes such different forms in different circumstances,[17] I will attempt to illustrate the links between sociological and psychological processes by means of a case study of the economic nationalism of British trade unions during the 1980's and early 1990's which I will go on to suggest later, may show certain parallels, at least in a very general structural way, with German Nazism during the interwar period. While Nazism and trade union economic nationalism are clearly very different from each other and arose in very different social conditions, I would suggest that they can nevertheless be seen as examples of the ways in which different kinds of nationalistic discourse may come to be strengthened and magnified by paranoid social defence mechanisms in which shame about the nation's weak or declining international position is associated with anger and rage against foreigners and the enemy within who are seen as to blame.

National identities in the discourse of British trade unions in the 1980's and early 1990's

Economic nationalism is a form of state reinforcing nationalism which attempts to use the state to insulate the national economy from market forces at the international level by means of policies aimed at establishing greater national self sufficiency and a stronger trade balance (Heilperin, 1960; Mayall, 1990). The intention is therefore to bring economic boundaries into closer correspondence with political and cultural boundaries at the national level. My main argument is that in the context of an increasingly global economy and a hostile laissez-faire Conservative government which might seem to point towards the need for more international solutions to meeting members' needs, British unions' increasing economic nationalism during the 1980's and 1990's can be thought of, at least partly, as a social defence mechanism rooted in the social conditions of the unions. The anxieties generating it however, need to be understood in a historical context.

As Mann's (1993a) historical analysis shows, the unions have traditionally been highly dependent on the nation state for class gains. Classes as organised economic actors emerged within the boundaries of separate nation states rather than transnationally as Marx expected and the most organised class struggles over things like universal suffrage, legalisation of the unions, poor law reform

and so on, all focused on the state without reference to class relations in other states (Mann, 1993a). As states increasingly came to regulate and institutionalise class relations within their boundaries, organised labour came to be territorially confined or 'caged' at the national level (Mann, 1993a).[18] Historically, there has therefore been a dialectical relation between nationally organised labour movements and nation states since class struggles have both depended on, and in turn strengthened, nation states and national boundaries (Mann, 1993a; Vogler, 1985). Between 1945 and the late 1970's for example, the unions gained admittance into the state and increasingly came to engage in political bargaining with governments for social citizenship in the form of welfare state reformism and economic planning for full employment, based on the political regulation of capital at the national level. Class struggles have therefore given labour a stake in the nation and an interest in defending and increasing sovereignty at the national level. Since they were preoccupied with domestic politics and had no serious geo-political or geo-economic interests in relation to either markets or territory, their national identities however, were inward looking rather than nationalistic (Mann, 1993a).

By the 1980's and 1990's however, the unions were geographically outflanked by the emergence of genuinely global economic forces which were then able to limit and indeed reverse the social citizenship powers of the nation state (Mann, 1993b; 1997). Economic forces in the form of trade, multi-national companies and international finance capital were integrating the national economies of separate nation states to the point where internationally open but relatively weak states such as Britain were much less able than in the past to politically regulate capital at the national level.[19] Employees in the advanced and to a lesser extent, the less advanced countries were also being brought into competition with each other on a single international labour market on which wages and living standards varied dramatically, yet they were much less able than during the previous post war era to use the nation state to protect themselves from market forces at the international level. At the same time, British unions also faced a series of hostile Conservative governments which not only weakened them with anti-trade union legislation but also dismantled many of the main corporatist arrangements of the 1970's and set about removing political controls over capital at the national level by means of a deflationary, promarket approach based on privatisation, liberalisation and deregulation.[20] In the context of a world recession, this combination of economic and political change resulted in major structural shifts in the British economy and very high levels of unemployment which affected organised labour particularly badly. Since most job losses occurred in large manufacturing industries where the unions had traditionally been most strongly organised,[21] trade union membership and the extent of collective bargaining both declined dramatically. Between 1979 and 1993 for example, trade union density[22] fell from over half (55%) to less than a third (31%) while between 1984 and 1990, the proportion of employees in plants with over 25 employees who had their wages partly determined by collective bargaining fell from 71% to 54% (Taylor, 1994).

As many commentators have suggested, in these circumstances the only way in which the unions could have hoped to have regained a measure of control over trans-nationally mobile capital was by abandoning their dependence on the nation state and uniting with workers abroad in an attempt to establish new forms of collective action at the European and the broader international levels (Levinson, 1972; Mann, 1993b, 1997; Teague and Grahl, 1992; Wendon, 1994). In practice however, the evidence from case studies of the unions' practical action during the 1980's and early 1990's together, with my own initial analysis of the discourse of trade union journals indicates that this only happened to a very limited degree. While there was an awareness of the increasing importance of international cooperation and some bilateral contact between union leaders in different countries, especially in Europe, Wendon's (1994) analysis of GMW, MSF and the TGWU[23] for example, shows that even after 1992, links with European unions were relatively superficial and orientated to the exchange of information rather than to the coordination of collective bargaining or pooling resources for cross national amalgamation.

My own analysis of the journals of these same three unions (together with the TUC)[24] during these years, indicates that while on the one hand they often advocated greater international cooperation in order to challenge the growing power of multi-national companies, on the other hand the discourse came to be characterised by increasing economic nationalism which was strengthened and magnified by feelings of shame, anger and rage. Rather than identifying with workers abroad in an attempt to regulate capital at the international level, their main identity was clearly with the nation. They explicitly claimed to speak for the nation and to be representing 'the national interest' 'the true interests of the British people', 'the needs and concerns of the British people' and 'the collective common sense of Britain'.[25] Economic nationalism however, was also reinforced by a strong sense of loss and shame rooted in a very polarised comparison between Britain's economic position in the past which was imagined with pride and its position today which was felt to be humiliating and shameful. The main theme was that whereas in the past 'we' were proud because we were a great nation, 'the workshop of the world' dominating the globe economically and in control of our own destiny, now we are ashamed because we are declining or sinking to the position of a relatively poor, weak, dependent Third World country reliant on foreigners for support with no independent control over our own destiny. Economic decline was therefore experienced as painful, humiliating and shameful. 'The final indignity' for example, was said to be that 'we who were once the workshop of the world now import more manufactured goods than we export' (GMW Journal July/August 1983). 'In less than 100 years', 'we' were said to have 'regressed from the workshop of the world to the sick man of Europe' (TASS Newsbrief vol. 2, 1986) and 'by most indicators we are now a second rate country' (TASS Newsbrief vol. 2 no. 1, 1986). Once an independent nation and the workshop of the world, Britain was now seen as being little more than a 'dumping ground', 'a warehouse' or 'shop window' for other people's goods (GMW Threads June, 1991: 6).

Shame however, easily turned to anger with Britain's enemies who were seen as to blame. Rather than admitting the reality of economic interdependence and questioning their dependence on the nation state, the unions blamed foreigners and the enemy within (ie the Conservative Government) who were experienced as threatening, hostile and destructive. They felt threatened and humiliated not just by cheaper imports from the Third World but also by direct investment by the Americans and Japanese who were described as arrogant, aggressive, unaccountable, machismo and domineering. As MSF put it '... US and Japanese business policy reflects a machismo approach which has little interest in equality' (Aerospace: A strategy for the Future). American and Japanese multi-national companies were perceived as 'predators', trying to 'invade' and 'annex' whole swathes of the British economy in order to gain a foothold in Europe through the UK — and the Government was hated for supporting their 'invasion' and 'take over' from within. The Government was seen as deliberately 'wrecking' British industries by starving them of cash, turning them into lucrative prey for foreign investors and then allowing foreign multi-nationals free reign to pursue their global strategies at Britain's expense, (MSF Newsbrief vol. 2 no. 1, 1986). Despite her 'flag waving and patriotic posturing', Mrs Thatcher was seen as 'presiding over nothing less than the betrayal of our economic and political independence'. She was accused of 'sacrificing our national pride and independence' 'on the alter of the almighty dollar' and 'doing more to undermine British sovereignty than any prime minister since Neville Chamberlain ...' (TUC Presidents Address to Annual Congress, 1986: 431–432).

By the 1990's the unions' national identities had therefore become much more emotional, outward looking and aggressively nationalistic, rather than simply national as in the past (Vogler, 1985). The question then, is how can we explain this rather paradoxical combination of a nationalistic discourse underpinned by feelings of shame and anger which locked them even more strongly into the nation state, in the context of a globalised economy in which there was then so little to be gained at the national level? I would suggest that the unions' traditional instrumental attachment to the nation state came to be strengthened and reinforced by social defence mechanisms which locked them even more firmly into the national mould and made it even harder for them to move towards more international solutions.[26] In a situation of unpredictable global capital movements, job insecurity, mass unemployment and attacks from the Government, the intense anxiety generated by external social conditions was likely to have combined with high levels of anxiety within the unions as groups (particularly in a situation of such large membership losses) to prevent individuals, including national union leaders, from thinking and push them into paranoid processes which were in turn associated with the emergence of a nationalistic and moralistic discourse. Rather than admitting the reality of international interdependence and questioning their dependence on the nation state, the feelings pushed them into blaming international elements and the enemy within, which in turn deflected their attention away

from what they might have had in common with foreigners and the real problems of dealing with the insecurities and dislocation resulting from operating on a politically unregulated international labour market on which wages and living standards varied so greatly.[27]

In short then, I would suggest that far from being free floating and purely cultural phenomena, national identities and discourses can be thought of as forming a bridge between the material and the psychological worlds since they are rooted both in political, economic and geopolitical processes in the external social world and in unconscious psychological processes and strong feelings. Discourses construct identities which in stressful or conflictual social situations come to have great emotional power because they also come to be underpinned by social defence mechanisms which may help to contain anxiety in the short term, but at the expense of any real change in the longer term. While in the short term the unions' nationalist social defence mechanisms for example, may have helped to contain the anxiety arising from the contradiction between a global economy and the need for employment and welfare policies at the national level, in the longer term they appear to be counter-productive because they contribute towards trapping the unions in predominantly national organisational forms and preventing them moving towards more international arrangements which may now provide a more effective means of regulating capital than the nation state.

Conclusion

I would like to conclude with two points. First, uncomfortable though it may seem, there may be certain parallels between the way in which sociological and psychological processes appeared to be combining to reinforce trade union nationalism during the 1980's and early 1990's, and the situation in Nazi Germany in the 1930's and early 1940's. In terms of the social context firstly, one of the most important things about the Nazi era in Germany was the conjunction of a divided nation state system and transnational or international elements such as transnational finance capital, international socialism (Bolshevism) and an international religious group – the Jews – which appeared to the Nazi's to challenge or not fit into the nation state. As Scheff (1994a) points out, the 1930's was also a period of great national weakness and humiliation for Germany following its defeat in the First World War. The German nation was humiliated by the Treaty of Versailles, under which it had to accept sole responsibility for starting the war and it was also expelled from the League of Nations as unworthy. Germany was therefore labelled, stigmatised and isolated from the world community (Scheff, 1994a). At the same time, world economic crisis combined with rapid industrialisation within Germany created very severe economic upheaval and social dislocation within the nation, which also reinforced a sense of inferiority and relative backwardness vis-a-vis more advanced nations (Almog 1990 Christie 1988).[28]

As Scheff (1994a) shows in his analysis of Hitler's appeal to the German people, under these circumstances German nationalism came to be underpinned by paranoid social defence mechanisms in which unacknowledged shame,[29] resentment, rage and hatred came to be projected onto the Jews as a symbol of all that was foreign and threatening to the German state, such as transnational finance capital and international Bolshevism for example (Almog, 1990 Friedlander, 1997). German nationalism therefore came to be associated with a new form of racial or 'redemptive' anti-semitism in which Judaism's international linkages were perceived as an offence against the nation state (Christie, 1988; Friedlander, 1997). As Christie (1998) points out, the core of anti-semitism was that an international Jewish conspiracy was undermining the foundations of the nation state. Jews therefore came to be seen as racial outsiders with no place in a world of nation states (Christie, 1988). This is important in the context of trade union nationalism today because although the discourses are very different, the fact that they are both underpinned by similar feelings and unconscious psychological processes means that the language and images used by the unions to describe multi-national companies and the Conservative Government in the 1980's and 1990's are sometimes vaguely reminiscent of European anti-semitism in the 1930's, at least in a very general structural way. In rather the same way as the Jews were seen as being rootless cosmopolitans or universalists who used countries for their own interests and were incapable of loyalty to any nation (Almog, 1990; Christie, 1988) multi-national companies were seen as thoroughly unpatriotic and a fundamental threat to the nation, and the Conservative Government were hated for being in league with them.[30]

The second point is that far from being a thing of the past as many sociologists today argue, the combination of a relatively integrated global economy and a divided nation state system may now be providing fertile conditions for an emotionalisation of national identities which runs counter to the internationalising tendencies inherent in the global economy. As Mann (1998) puts it, the problem is that we now live in a global society in the sense that there is now a single *economic* power network, but this is not a unitary society or an ideological community or a state. Nations have been brought into competition with each other in an international environment in which there is no overall political regulation at either the European or the global levels. While on the one hand the international economy has been associated with more genuine internationalism than in the past (Mann, 1998) the lack of political regulation at the global level leaves plenty of room for increased instability, competition and hostility (Scheff, 1994a). The reason why sociologists need to take feelings seriously in the contemporary world is that they may be combining with sociological changes to strengthen and reinforce nationalism and the principle of nationality in a world in which it might now be more productive to question it.

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Notes

1 As Craib (1998a) argues, Giddens' concept of structuration for example, tends to dissolve structure into action yet at the same time is also based on a limited cognitive conception of the actor which overlooks feeling and emotion.
2 I am grateful to Tony Woodiwiss for suggesting this formulation of the issue during verbal discussion.
3 In John Hall's (1995) analysis for example, the emotional power of nationalism is seen as a direct result of political and economic factors such as defeat in war, economic uncompetitiveness or blocked social mobility whereas for Calhoun (1997) it is more the result of claims to national superiority (ethical imperatives) embedded in the discourse of nationalism.
4 Jenkins (1996) argues that even our deepest and most basic sense of selfhood is really a social product taken in from the outside during socialisation in early childhood. He argues that before the acquisition of language, infants are open to forceful and consequential identification from the outside which will affect them all their lives because at this stage in their development they lack the resources and competence to successfully counter external definitions by others. Identities acquired before the acquisition of language are therefore said to be more external and authoritative than those acquired later and also much more resistant to change.
5 Drawing on Foucault, post structuralists put forward a new conception of 'the subject' or 'subjectivity' which is not the same as the individual human person. In contrast to individuals, subjects are seen as socially or symbolically constructed categories. Disciplinary power was seen by Foucault as a new type of power which in contemporary society, operated primarily through discourses which constituted and constructed, rather than simply reflected reality. For a discussion see Barrett (1993) Bradley (1996) Hall (1992, 1996) and Lupton (1996).
6 Projective identification also occurs in psychoanalysis during transference.
7 As Craib (1989) points out, the baby's anxiety is thought to change from a fear of destruction to a fear that the newly accepted bad feelings will outweigh the good feelings and the baby will destroy the person who is loved with its hatred.
8 Craib (1989: 149) notes that Segal's development of Klein's work echoes Lacan's analysis of the emergence of symbols and language, except that Segal sees symbols as a replacement for the mother as a phantasised ideal object rather than for oedipal desire, as is the case with Lacan.
9 Object relations theorists disagree over the extent to which splitting and projection are a response to purely internally generated feelings of rage and destructiveness as they are for Klein, or whether they also result from bad experiences in the outside world such as for example, bad parenting. Alice Miller's (1983a, 1983b) work for example, shows how people such as Hitler who have experienced harsh and violent childhoods, are particularly susceptible to more extreme forms of splitting and projection in later life.
10 Menzies Lyth's (1988) classic study of student nurses for example, shows how those who could not adapt to the hospital's paranoid social defence system tended to leave nursing. Paradoxically 'leavers' tended to be more mature individuals who were rather less likely (as individuals) to deal with anxiety through splitting and projection.
11 As Menzies Lyth (1988) points out, plans for organisational change which seem appropriate rationally often do not work in practice because they do not take into account the anxieties and social defences underpinning the existing organisational culture and structure which plans for change usually threaten to upset. In her view, the problem with social defence mechanisms is

that they prevent unrealistic or pathological anxiety being differentiated from realistic anxiety related to the actual social situation, so that anxiety tends to remain permanently at a level determined more by phantasies than reality and realistic anxiety cannot be dealt with in a constructive way (Menzies Lyth, 1988).

12 The main problem with Scheff's (1994a) analysis is that he does not explain the unconscious psychoanalytic mechanisms underpinning engulfment and isolation – he simply equates them with Durkheim's altruistic and anomic suicide. I have therefore attempted to impute them on the basis of Craib's and Bion's work.

13 See for example Stillar (1988) who argues that the text (ie discourse) weaves us together and is an important way in which we create identification. Burman and Parker (1993) similarly argue that emotions and identity are constructed in discourse.

14 Mann (1995) emphasises the provision of national communications infrastructures such as canals, roads, railways, post offices, telegraphs, schools and so on which increased the density of social interaction within state boundaries and therefore helped to strengthen the nation as an experienced community.

15 In T.H. Marshall's sense of access to three sets of rights, namely civic rights (such as equality before the law and free speech) political rights (such as the right to vote and organise politically) and social rights (namely the right to a basic level of economic and social welfare in the form of Keynesian full employment policies and national welfare states).

16 Even though few states have ever really been culturally homogeneous, Mann (1993b) uses the term nation-state rather than national state which he justifies on the grounds that most states still base their legitimacy on the nation as a cultural concept. Following Mann, I will also use the term nation-state rather than national state. For a discussion of these terms see McCrone (1998).

17 As Mann (1993a, 1995) points out, it is conventional to distinguish between state subverting, state reinforcing and state creating nationalism although the first two are now much more important than state creating nationalism which was typical of the nineteenth century Prussian or German state. State subverting nationalism, which is usually cultural or political, is characteristic of oppressed minorities who want to acquire their own separate state whereas state reinforcing nationalism (which may be economic, political, cultural or some combination of the three) occurs when groups attempt to use an existing state to achieve either increased political participation (reform) the amalgamation of territories, the exclusion of a minority or greater protection from threatening economic, political or cultural forces outside the state.

18 Under pressure from nationally organised labour movements states introduced social and welfare legislation restricting the way in which capital was able to use labour (eg The Factory Acts, Health and Safety legislation, restrictions on working hours etc) and also increased the amount of national income passing through their hands in order to redistribute between classes and groups within their boundaries (for a discussion see Vogler, 1985).

19 Between 1983 and 1988 for example, world trade grew at a compound annual rate of 5% while global FDI increased by over 20% per annum in real terms (Julius, 1990). For a country of its size, the UK now has a very high level of both inward and outward investment, ranking second only to the USA with its very much larger domestic economy. From the unions' point of view, the problem with international interdependence is that when capital is able to operate in an area which is wider than nation states, class struggles which weaken capitals operating within the nation are counter-productive since they reduce the nation's international competitiveness and thus the level of investment and employment within the nation.

20 As Gamble (1988) points out, the removal of virtually all political controls on inward and outward investment also acted as and additional stimulus to the complete internationalisation of the British economy.

21 Between 1979 and 1993 the proportion of jobs in manufacturing industries fell from 31% to 20% while the proportion of jobs in the service sector increased from 58% to 67% (Taylor 1994). The growth of new jobs however, was largely concentrated in smaller enterprises in the private service sector often employing female part-time workers who have traditionally been much more difficult to organise (Taylor, 1994; Purcell, 1993). During the same period, public

sector jobs also fell from 7.1 million to 5.6 million (Taylor, 1994). Unemployment therefore rose more steeply in Britain than in other countries and in a very short period of time Britain moved from being a country with one of the lowest unemployment rates in the OECD to one of the highest. Between 1971 and 1986, unemployment rose from approximately 2% to 11%, although in just two years, between 1979 and 1981, it doubled (Gallie and Marsh, 1984).

22 Trade union density is measured as a proportion of the employed workforce (Taylor, 1994: 29).

23 The Manufacturing Science and Finance Union (MSF), The General and Municipal Workers' Union (GMW) and the Transport and General Workers' Union (TGWU).

24 Although I studied a representative sample of unions in all the main sectors of the economy, the case study presented here (Vogler forthcoming) is based on an analysis of the journals of three large manufacturing unions (MSF, GMW and the TGWU) plus the TUC. Union journals are of course, mainly written by national union officials for lay officials and the general membership. My main empirical question was who or what were the unions (national officials) referring to when they used the word 'we' and who do they regard as 'they' or 'them')? My claims about changes in the discourse since the 1970's are based on a similar analysis undertaken previously which covers the 1970's (Vogler, 1985).

25 While Britain is in fact a multi-national state, a sense of Britishness adheres to the state. As McCrone (1998) points out, Scottish and Welsh identities have traditionally been nested within a broader British identity.

26 Internationalism is also inhibited by two important sociological factors. The first is that the unions' international organisations are all inter-national rather than supra-national since they consist of separate nationally sovereign trade union centres which lack a central organisation capable of over-riding their separate national constituents to establish common interests at the global level. Despite their inter-national organisations, the unions are therefore relatively isolated (in Scheff's (1994a) terms) from their counterparts abroad. The second is that as yet there are no genuine supra-national political units through which capital could be politically regulated at the international level in the way that states have traditionally regulated economic forces within their own boundaries. Existing international institutions do not even remotely resemble supra-national organisations. They are composed of sovereign states concerned with establishing their national interests in the international arena rather than with transferring sovereignty to a transnational unit. The UN and the ILO for example, are interstate organisations which are unable to alter the structure of the international system or the nature of relations between states, while the EU is primarily an economic network with little or no political economy (Mann, 1998). As Mann (1998) points out, its multi-agency regulatory bodies are restricted to ad hoc tinkering with capitalist markets, they are unable to plan or confront them head on.

27 If national trade union officials had been interviewed alone, as individuals, they may well have expressed more internationalism than was evident in the discourse in the journals. The problem however, was that the social defence mechanisms reflected in the discourse tended to prevent much change in the way in which the unions operated as organisations. This is rather akin to Menzies Lyth's (1989) finding that when she spoke to nurses individually they deplored the practices used to protect them against the anxiety of their working situation such as depersonalisation of patients and so on, but in their working situation, they were trapped by them and relatively powerless against them.

28 This is not intended to be a comprehensive explanation of Nazism, I am simply pointing to certain factors which may have been particularly conducive to the play of unconscious paranoid processes and strong feelings. There is in fact great debate among social scientists on the origins of Nazism, for a discussion see Botz (1993). As John Hall (1986) points out, politics and the nature of the state were also crucially important. Germany had a half modern semi-authoritarian state and the country lacked a strong political centre capable of holding society together so that it was politically polarised between the Communist and Nazi parties.

29 For an analysis of the shame rage sequences in Mein Kampf see Scheff (1994a). While both discourses were underpinned by shame and rage, the feelings underpinning Nazism were very much more extreme than those underpinning the unions' economic nationalism in the 1980's

and early 1990's. This may be partly because the social context was very different but also because, as Scheff (1994a) points out, in Nazism the intense shame and humiliation were almost completely unacknowledged, so that the anger and rage were much more intense and compulsive than in the case of the unions' economic nationalism today.

30 I am not making a direct comparison between the so called Jewish conspiracy and multi-national companies since the later of course are real material entities which can cause considerable economic and social disruption whereas the former was a complete myth – the Jews were perceived by the Nazis as *symbolising* threatening economic, political and cultural forces outside the nation. I am grateful to Cynthia Cockburn for drawing my attention to the possibility of confusion on this point.

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