



PALGRAVE POLITICS OF
IDENTITY AND CITIZENSHIP SERIES

Challenging Alienation in the British Working-Class

Building a Community of Equals

Sam Taylor Hill

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Palgrave Politics of Identity and Citizenship Series

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Sam Taylor Hill

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

I began this book initially as a PhD in 2019 at the end of a decade that had been characterised by the fallout from the Great Recession, austerity, and a Brexit vote that left the country increasingly divided. This was a time of upheaval and new attention was being paid to the working-class as the subject of discussions around the rise of populism and the underlying structural changes and experiences which impacted it. Such attention resonated with experiences in my own life. As someone from a working-class background, I was immersed in narratives that the Labour Party had left working-people behind, which was often to be heard from Labour voters themselves, alongside a cynical apathy that saw politics as for everyone but ‘us’. I had also seen first-hand how wages had stagnated and left people struggling, how attitudes towards workers were often disrespectful, and how decisions made by elites did little to benefit those at the bottom of the socio-economic hierarchy, even as inequality skyrocketed. This academic trend highlighted some of these experiences and, although a negative way of coming to study politics, has inspired me to pursue research that captures the struggle that working-people go through and, hopefully, offers some kind of remedy to them. To this end, the book asks why working-people are so often ‘left behind’, and what might we do about it?

These questions are especially relevant when we think about the developments within the working-class that have occurred in the last decade.

For instance, working-people are cited by Sandel and the right-communitarians as being *the* group that contributed to the growth of the populist-right (Eatwell and Goodwin 2018; Sandel 2020; Sobolewska and Ford 2020). It was touted as being responsible for the election of Donald Trump, whilst in this country we have seen a white working-class unification around an anti-migrant platform in the early years of the 2010s, before coalescing around the issue of Brexit, which fundamentally altered our relationship with the European Union and set in motion some of the key developments in British politics that were to occur over the next seven years. Indeed, in the wake of Brexit, we have seen a steady increase in episodes of social discord, whilst our political stability has been threatened by a corresponding ‘crisis of democracy’ in which we have witnessed two early elections, the downfall of four governments, a series of votes of no confidence, and the rise of a Boris Johnson-led Conservative Party which subjected Labour to its worst defeat in memory through a combination of its support for Brexit and a cultural-conservatism which declared a ‘War on Woke’, and which has itself now unravelled to be replaced by a government that has thus far failed to curb the burgeoning cost-of-living crisis.

The legacy of this populism has been disunity, instability, and the sundering of community upon a fractious, culturally charged basis, whilst working-class people have been hit hard by an unprecedented cost-of-living crisis and remain in a position that is likely to decline further. Indeed, even with Keir Starmer’s Labour Party set to win the next election, there is no great fanfare or optimism. Bereft of working-class MPs, and with a leader that has already been criticised for his ‘broken promises’ and whose approval rating sits at -12, Labour’s ascendancy is probably best understood as the only realistic alternative to a government that has ultimately overseen a significant reversal in Britain’s fortunes over the past 14 years (Stacey and Crerar 2024; YouGov 2024). This is a key moment for British politics, as disenchantment becomes more widespread and citizens feel let down by successive governments; there is a very real danger of yet another populist surge, or a further decade of decline, in which the gap between rich and poor continues to increase exponentially (Hill 2023). Without a reconsideration of our society, and the way that we understand the issues faced by the working-class, there is potential for further degradation in the livelihoods of our citizens and of our very political system (Brown 2024). To arrest this decline there is an urgent need to develop a framework for conceptualising the issues of working-class people, who suffer so visibly at

present, and a following theory that can serve as the basis for their renewal within, and for the benefit of, our country.

The idea behind this focus is twofold. First, the working-class continues to suffer in a country that many feel has left them behind. This is well-established in the literature and something which the book focuses on throughout. Second, many of the structures that have ultimately degraded the working-class, and much of what has been lost, including our sense of community, routes to dignification, and a feeling of personal or collective control, or a belief that one matters, have implications across class and for the country as a whole—it is a reflection of what we are as a country, where we are going, and how we treat our citizens. In this sense, in seeking to support and renew the working-class, one sees hope for the development of a position which can address some of the deep and persistent structural problems which have taken root within our society and put us on better footing for the future. It is in this stead that one looks to characterise the working-class experience as one that is consistent with alienation and seeks some remedy for its position with a politics that is ethical, socialist, and nationalist in orientation, seeing a combination of these as crucial to challenging the toxic populist—nationalism of the right-communitarians with a view to restoring to working-people a sense of agency, dignity, and recognition within a wider reciprocal community. This is a position that hopes to remedy the damage caused by right-populism over the past seven years and to restore working-people to a position of regard. It is in this stead that one continues, maintaining a focus on the working-class that ultimately leads us towards a Progressive Nationalism that could be the key to a more extensive, deeper, national renewal—the kind necessary to restore our country.

MOTIVATING QUESTIONS AND METHODOLOGY

Following from this, the conceptual framework that one develops can best be described as one of alienation, and the core purpose of this book is to identify:

1. What alienation is and what its core characteristics are.
2. Whether it is an appropriate label for the issues that working-class people face.

Having deliberated upon these questions, and provided an answer which suggests that the working-class are suffering from alienation in the form of community breakdown, agential decline, and the loss of dignity, one subsequently seeks to address the additional question:

3. What can be done to ameliorate its effects?

This latter question takes the book in a more conceptual direction. This may seem a strange step to the reader, both in that one's philosophical foundation is over a century old and that alienation is something which is felt in practice. However, one holds it as a necessary step. The drawing together of these works to address a contemporary issue is justified on the basis that they speak to those things which we currently lack and conceive of only within the bounds of our present. In many respects, we have forgotten what community, for instance, means other than in a far more individualised sense than that of the Idealists, whilst we have erected barriers between the individual and the community which Idealism, or Socialist Pluralism, sees as artificial. In discussing these theories, one comes to engage with contemporary debates—for instance, around notions like the common good which have been seeing a resurgence through Michael Sandel in relation to working-class concerns and which themselves connect with arguments made by right communitarians like David Goodhart. The book also contributes to the resurrection of British Idealism as a framework to explore contemporary issues, synthesising Idealism with the socialism of G.D.H. Cole and Harold Laski. Thus, the works selected maintain a continued relevance for contemporary debates and scholarly pursuits.

One likewise makes use of significant secondary data in detailing the present condition of the working-class. One does not engage in primary fieldwork for two reasons. First, there is already much research that has been done, especially post-Brexit vote, to study the working-class existence, which one makes extensive use of throughout the book. Second, one sees in these literatures that we are lacking theoretical frameworks to understand and address these issues. One therefore settles on using pre-existing work to establish that the working-class is suffering from alienation and subsequently outlines a theoretical framework for its amelioration.

It does this because the right-communitarian account, although useful in highlighting the factors, like community breakdown and the loss of

dignity, and of agency, which cause alienation, advocates solutions that leave in place damaging structures and neglect to consider the problem at its most fundamental level as the disassociation between subject and object. These authors neglect to understand alienation as a concept, borne out of a rich philosophical tradition that has historically been a focal point for the left. To understand how to challenge alienation, we must reconsider it conceptually. Indeed, many of the issues raised by the right-communitarians can be best understood within the context of the neglected British Idealist and Socialist traditions. These groups maintain a stronger theoretical connection with alienation as outlined by Hegel and Marx.

From this, one establishes that alienation can be challenged by (1) Idealism because it recognises the importance of human bonds and relationships as key in the development of meaning and a sense of community, (2) Socialist Pluralism because it gives account for our desire to see us influence the world, and (3) Guild and Ethical Socialism because of their moral inclinations and devotion to the problem of human dignity. This is an abridged overview of the contribution of each to the amelioration of alienation, but it serves to demonstrate the view of the book that we must return to the central themes of dignity, agency, and community, which are covered at great length by these neglected scholars. This will be placed within a contemporary context later in the book to demonstrate that it has the capacity to ameliorate alienation on a practical level too.

One returns to these themes momentarily, having first sketched out the shape of the book.

SHAPE OF THE BOOK

It begins with a chapter situating the core ideas of the work so that it is clear to the reader how its various parts come together.

Chapters 3 and 4 then define the working-class and alienation. Within this first chapter one draws upon the works of Bourdieu and Savage to suggest that working-class-ness is built upon an economic, social, and cultural basis that is broadly relational between its members and which is related to certain historical and contemporary tendencies.

Chapter 4 addresses the concept of alienation, making use of Hegelian philosophy, before discussing Marx's 1844 Manuscripts, which emphasise the fetishisation of 'alien' structures under capitalism in opposition to human flourishing. This is brought together with Macintyre's discussion

of community and narrative breakdown. Taken together, these works lead one to establish the three core characteristics of alienation as related to the loss or lack of community, dignity, and agency.

One then determines the extent to which the working-class is alienated within Chap. 5. Here we see a sustained consideration of these three characteristics, with input from right-communitarians like Goodhart and Kaufmann, to populist scholars Eatwell and Goodwin, as well as left-leaning accounts by Sandel, Cruddas, McKenzie, and others. This chapter also gives direction to the book, setting out its distinctive components, and introduces the reader to concepts like the common good, as well as defending the identification of alienation as separate from either an anomie or social capital diagnosis of the classes' problems.

Chapters 6 and 7 make a break from the first half of the book and propose an answer to this third question concerning alienation's amelioration. Chapter 6 gives an overview of the British Idealist tradition. Herein one establishes the value of the common good and returns to the idea of flourishing to give an account of it. We also see some discussion of the individual/community debate between liberals and communitarians wherein one suggests that Idealism charts a path between them with a thicker conception of morality than its more liberal counterparts, but a thinner conception than many communitarians.

Following on from the discussion of Idealism, one will say in Chap. 7 that, although many aspects of it are commendable and will play an important role in grounding theory, there is a need to combine it with 'socialist' theoretical perspectives to understand the role of capitalism in inhibiting dignity. This imbues Idealism with a more well-rounded adherence to social justice, as well as an explicit rejection of neoliberal-capitalist, echoing the arguments introduced in Chap. 5. This chapter draws to a close by emphasising the importance of civil society, adherence to the common good, and the compatibility of Idealism with these socialisms, leading to the creation of Idealist-Socialism.

Chapters 8, 9, and 10 are dedicated to the application of this theory to the three characteristics of alienation, tied together here as a three-part theory of Progressive Nationalism which delves into the economy and civil society. Chapter 8 outlines the multicultural aspect of this to renew belonging and dignity across the working-class and its sub-groups, whilst one presents a case for the development of the economy around the common good in Chap. 9, especially keeping the dignity and agency components in mind, before outlining the agential importance of civil society expansion in Chap. 10.

One concludes by reiterating the understanding of alienation as applied to the British working-class, before setting out the core principles, constitutive of an ethos, which one details as part of its suggestion for the amelioration of alienation. This amounts to a reassertion of the need to ground an understanding of the common good within the economic sphere, to adopt a policy of civil society expansion, and to propagate an inclusive Progressive Nationalism. One ends by reflecting on the book’s findings and makes recommendations for further research.

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CHAPTER 2

Situating Idealist-Socialism

Given the scope of this book, this chapter outlines how it connects with contemporary debates and subsequently brings those debates together to address working-class alienation. One begins by outlining the book's diagnosis as against the later Marxian notion of exploitation, seeing the latter as neglecting the importance of *spirit*. One then presents the right-communitarian explanation for alienation, including their focus on structural and cultural decline, as well as their populist nationalist answer to this problem, from which one later diverges. This divergence features an emphasis on nationalism within the progressive multicultural politics of the left, which one asserts as playing a core role in the amelioration of alienation through the provision of meaning, as against a cosmopolitan alternative. Having established this position one identifies the central thread of Idealism that connects the ideas within this book, using this to relate with contemporary debates between liberal-individualists and communitarians, as well as in respect to questions concerning the purpose of our economy. One concludes by stressing that though this work engages across several debates, these components form a comprehensive understanding of the problem of alienation, as well as the Idealist-Socialist position offered as a corrective.

ALIENATION AND EXPLOITATION

The book engages with Marx in outlining a theoretical framework for alienation. One places an emphasis on the ideas of a Young Marx, rather than the later Marxist focus on exploitation. One moves towards this earlier position by following a Hegelian logic which privileges ‘spirit’ over the later Marxian materialism, though one recognises the importance of materials in contributing to dignity. However, this is not sufficient alone given that material goods do not provide purpose nor affect the bonds that make life something *more*.

The early Marx asserts that without ideas or bonds, we cannot fully flourish. Hegel (2018) and he suggest that we should be able to see ourselves reflected in the world, including our values, understandings, and *Gattungswesen*,¹ which together with others constitute community. The ideal community for this Young Marx is one where we can exert agency over our society equally, seeing to it that we can contribute to something *greater* than ourselves (Marx 2000). This roots an ideal of self-worth and meaning as central tenets of a fulfilled life and asserts that we must be able to conceive of possibilities and enjoy the cultivation of bonds, not to further transactions but to experience shared interests and affections. To this end then, this central focus upon human worth should not be usurped by a materialistic focus, which Marx (2000, 30–33) contends occurs under capitalism with the transformation of the worker into a resource for the cultivation of wealth—devoid of humanity, without agency, and no longer an end in themselves. This notion of alienation, with its reference to equal human worth, capacity for agential action, and the desire for meaning within a receptive community, reflects much of the contemporary desires of working-people across Britain, who face degradation at work and exclusion from politics and feel unable to shape their country. This is a point that Cruddas (2021), Sandel (2020), and the right-communitarians allude to, citing how working-class values, relationships, and their decline since the 1980s have been especially atomising to a previously strong sense of community (Goodhart 2020). This new world with its overt-transactionalism, lack of narrative, or meaningful recognition does nothing to renew purpose nor to inspire our creativeness for common ends. In

¹‘Species-essence’ refers to our desires to be an active natural being, exhibiting emotions, seeking bonds and affections, and a need of people for a breadth of personal development, as well as physical needs for food, water, clothing, shelter, etc.

this respect, alienation accurately characterises the working-class experience, which is one of degraded agency, the sundering of community, and the loss of *meaning*, with a corresponding impact on our capacity to find dignity in what we do.

One rejects the concept of exploitation to capture this condition within capitalism because it does not speak to this meaning element. Instead, Marx adopts a more mechanistic position by explaining that exploitation refers to how the working-class are *forced* by their lack of ownership to accept whatever conditions are offered to them (Screpanti 2019). The desperation that this engenders often leads capitalists to use their privileged position to *exploit* workers, appropriating for themselves the value created by the workers' labour. This concept reflects Marx's view that the working-class do not get the "fruits of their labour", to which they are entitled, but it does not go any further towards spirit or refer to those values that the Young Marx noted as part of our species-essence (Marx 2018, 413). This does not make exploitation a worthless concept, and it certainly has much relevance when used in tandem with moral objections to capitalism, advanced by the socialistic component of this book, but one nevertheless points out that the popular frame of exploitation, referred to in a significant amount of contemporary scholarship, lacks the breadth to entirely characterise the working-class experience. For this reason, one stresses alienation, seeing that exploitation can be part of our discussion, but that it lacks analytical value as a comprehensive explanation for the present struggles of the British working-class.

THE RIGHT-COMMUNITARIAN POSITION

The book takes seriously the claims made within the right-communitarian literature, which cites alienation as arising out of the transformation of the United Kingdom from a country in which the working-class had their interests represented within parliament by the Labour Party and within wider society by their associations, seeing themselves as active shapers of their nation. These communitarians identify two core 'declines', structural and cultural, and see that much of the contemporary struggles of the working-class can be understood in relation to them. This finds itself expressed in Chap. 5, but let us outline the core of this position.

This first decline can be considered a structural failure brought on by industrial deterioration, the Thatcherite constraint of the unions, and the transformation of the economy into one reliant on cognitive knowledge,

itself made subservient to wealth (Goodhart 2020). This echoes the left-communitarian argument (Sandel 2020), sharing a structural diagnosis which one defends as the backdrop against which additional indignities were inflicted on the class. In this sense, one does not critique the right-communitarian position and sees that the decline of working-class associations had a corresponding negative impact on their agential ability to shape the nation, to press claims upon it, or to develop their class dignity. Essentially, where in the post-war era their associations had been afforded a place within the national-corporatist structure of governance and their work recognised as bringing value to the country, since the 1980s those associations have been effectively sidelined by governments, and their work largely dismissed.

Additionally, Kaufmann (2018) contends that structural decline was coupled with a cultural decline/shock. As the world became more globalised, the political shift of the Labour Party towards a pro-immigration, socially liberal platform with a neo-liberal economic policy, was to move the party away from historic working-class values focused on fairness, solidarity, and a rooted ideal of community. Here the right-communitarian argument of commentators like Goodhart finds common ground with Labour MP Jon Cruddas (2021), as well as Liza McKenzie (2018), and Evans and Tilley (2017), who each consider the changing nature of the Labour Party as having a corresponding impact on a working-class ability to root and express itself. Where the right-communitarians differ here is in the way that they stress that social liberalism, termed under the umbrella of ‘identity politics’, was met with initial disinterest from the white working-class especially and then dismay as conditions failed to improve. This was to exacerbate a *perceived* favouritism of minority groups thanks to the passing of progressive legislation on racial injustice, LGBTQ+ rights, and the like, at the same time as offering other working-class subgroups nothing in the way of secure jobs or frames through which to understand themselves (Goodhart 2017).

Kaufmann (2018) ties to this the increase in migrant numbers and sees migration as having an impact on those last vestiges of rooted community. He asserts that the lack of working-class associations in local areas at the same time as an influx of migrants meant that there was no opportunity for those living in these areas to engage with their new neighbours. This, coupled with anti-migrant rhetoric, was to fracture the community further as the, predominantly white, working-class witnessed their communities or close-by neighbourhoods transformed and feared for the further decline

of a way of life and ties that were the last vestiges of their historic frames of self-understanding. The result of this has been distrust and tension between erstwhile working-class sub-groups, which has been to divide communities and increase alienation.

The shift of the Labour Party under Blair towards a ‘disproportionate’ focus on social liberalism and economic neoliberalism was said to underline these concerns and brought into disregard working-people who continued to struggle unaided or only partially aided by socially liberal legislation. To put this simply, many within the class felt that their political agent had abandoned them for a new electoral coalition of university-educated middle class, minority peoples, and the unemployed (Cruddas 2021). Such thinking was to form the basis of what Eatwell and Goodwin (2018) calls the “Politics of Resentment”—a perspective which holds that events such as the Brexit vote can be justified as a release of working-class frustration and a desire to again be recognised within this country as integral members. This politics, devoid of meaningful economic intervention and with a disproportionate focus on ‘identity politics’, was then to alienate the working-class from one another and to leave them and their associations largely unable to improve material circumstances, as well as without a means of understanding themselves in reference to those frames which had defined a more dignified existence in the post-war era.

EVALUATING THIS POSITION

One does not deny the potency of these arguments and would partially agree with these claims. In fact, a section of the working-class was alienated by structural and cultural changes, especially those who took away the jobs and associational connections that had provided them an income and social status. This can be partly understood too in the context of a globalisation, advanced by New Labour, which undermined ‘hand’ and ‘heart’ roles—the mainstay of the working-class as defined later in Chap. 3—in favour of a focus on knowledge as the means for the living of the good life. Similarly, it would be difficult to deny evidence of community disunity/distrust between working-class sub-groups, with polarisation around religion, culture, and race/ethnicity. As we see in Chap. 5, there is traction in such arguments, as well as for Kaufmann’s (2018) claim that we have witnessed a disproportionate focus on the social realm rather than the provision of security for many working-people through those frames which had once brought them dignity.

However, one takes aim at the right-communitarians' nationalism, seeing their view as founded on a logic which has not sought to quantify the extent of perceived issues nor makes space for the multicultural entity that Britain has become. The plight of minority groups cannot be understated, and many of those groups are working-class. Although the social liberalism of New Labour gave new emphasis to social issues, it would be hard to argue that they benefited from the plight of their fellows. In fact, most minority groups within the working-class suffer those same precarities, feel excluded within our society, and sense the same tension within their communities (Evans and Tilley 2017). In this way, though one agrees that social liberalism became a core component of the New Labour platform at the same time as more traditional focuses on the dignity of labour, material condition of working-people, and their capacity for agential assertion declined, it would not be accurate to suggest that minority peoples profited off this situation. Rather, they still feel those same pressures, yet are now confronted with a politics of resentment which has led to the further fracturing of community.

The right-communitarian answer to this is the reassertion of a populist ethno-cultural nationalism which privileges the white majority in the class. Kaufmann especially sees this as a necessity, suggesting that only a more majoritarian-assimilationist model of belonging will be sufficient to deal with 'identity politics', which he, and Goodhart (2017, 2020), sees as diminishing the working-class within the national community. One will detail this position later in this chapter, but let us assert a fundamental point—that we cannot root the working-class with a majoritarian nationalism that quashes 'identity politics' in favour of an assimilationist stance rooted in ethno-cultural centrism.

This is only likely to open new lines of conflict. Identity politics as the cause of such decline is insufficient in exploring the problem and as an answer is only likely to sow a discord that achieves none of these structural objectives for the class nor provides a means of ameliorating these tensions. This is why one takes the right-communitarian argument towards different ends, seeing such resentment as having been born out of an alienation from community, as well as a political class that genuinely did fail to treat working-class aspirations, values, and desires, in anything but a transactional sense—offering only limited material compensation at a time when structure and culture were shifting further away from their historic way of life, with aforementioned consequences for their rooted sense of purpose, security, and dignity. This can be applied across the

working-class and has created tensions that eat away at core values of solidarity, fairness, and community. Thus, where the right-communitarians blame identity politics and social liberalism, one takes a more holistic stance to say that it is true that New Labour shifted its focus away from the working-class, repackaging some interests under the frame of minority rights, but really continued the practice of structural and cultural decline which was to rob working-people of agency, dignity, and a more expansive sense of community. We might define this as the uprooting of the classes' structures without any provision to replace them with frames that connect with them or circumstances which improve their lives.

A NATIONALIST FRAMING FOR NON-ALIENATION

In advancing this claim that populist-majoritarian nationalism is insufficient in challenging alienation, one can be tempted to err towards a liberal-cosmopolitan alternative, which has been popular with some on the left in recent years (Blond 2010; Timothy 2020). However, where one differs from some of the contemporary left is in its preference for a nationalist frame. This involves the partial rejection of a cosmopolitanism which, although admirable, is in practice likely too unrooted to challenge alienation at present. Broadly, whilst one can acknowledge the main thrust of such an argument which seeks ethical equality in the way that we think across borders, this is not a frame through which the working-class tend to view themselves and is to provide an insufficient, abstract foundation upon which to reconstitute the classes' sense of belonging. One takes two more specific issues with the cosmopolitan alternative, namely that it does not give due regard to the importance of groups, cultures, and specific attachments in themselves, and as important frames for meaning generation, and that, second, it does not appear to fit the way in which most working-people see themselves and consequently, at best, lacks resonance with them and, at worst, can be viewed as itself alienating.

On this first point, although one would not disagree with the cosmopolitan principle that human beings are "the ultimate units of moral concern", the focus tends to be on the individualised human being rather than the group or culture (Pogge 1992, 73). Indeed, Appiah's (2015) account of global citizenship does not emphasise appreciation of specific cultural or other attachments on their own terms. Rather, he emphasises mutual respect considering our differences for the purposes of deliberation on important matters and seems then to deny that membership in a particular

cultural community is necessary for an individual to flourish. Instead, they are encouraged to pick and choose their attachments (Pogge 1992, 74). One terms this an individualisation of culture to the point that a culture exists only to be ‘chosen’ (Yuracko in Calhoun 2008, 433). Such a thought is to deny the legitimacy of specific cultures because it treats them as a product, instrumentalised for our uses rather than playing any inherent role in our shaping. In the view of this book, we need an account of these collectives because it is from those that we establish our norms and our frames of self-understanding. We can never really ‘choose’ our culture, and so to advance an instrumentalised view of it, in which culture can be eschewed in its entirety as useless to the individual, is to reject it on its own terms as the embodiment and collective work of many selves, with a historical pedigree, values, and even institutions that have been vital in developing meaning (Parekh 2000). If we view culture as something of a choice, then it becomes possible for it to take on a transactional quality in which we adopt it only because it suits us. This is effectively to deny its importance as something of itself, that shapes us through language, place, custom, and tradition, and which can, in turn, be shaped by us and become something more than it had once been (Modood 2018, 2020). In this way, culture is something to be appreciated and, whilst there are certain practices which we might well reject, we can still enjoy our attachments or appreciate its role in shaping our sense of individual self. As such, one rejects a cosmopolitanism that transactionalises culture, individualising it so as to make attachment a choice. This is not to say that one does not see some value in an allegiance to the human community in a broad sense but would argue that such cosmopolitan allegiances are themselves not a choice either. In fact, there may be an ethico-rational obligation to our fellows across the globe owing to our existence as a species,² and it is in our best interests to pursue a common commitment to the preservation of our world regarding issues like climate change. On this basis, one asserts that specific cultural attachments are legitimate features of our world and that, further, we might uphold additional allegiances to our fellows across the world on issues to maintain our species and the cultures that shape us.

Indeed, specific attachments maintain significance for many working-people that goes beyond a rational recognition and towards emotive rootedness. For example, nations can be inclusive of ‘us’, our achievements,

²T.H. Green suggests the possibility of ever-extending ethical bonds as we come to feel tangibly that ‘global’ nature of humanity.